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LETTERS

ON THE

ENGLISH NATION:

BY

BATTISTA ANGELONI,

A JESUIT,

Who resided many years in LONDON.

Translated from the Original ITALIAN,

BY THE

AUTHOR of the MARRIAGE ACT a Novel.

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Cupio in tantis reipublicæ periculis non dissolutum videri. CICERO in Catalinam.

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Vol. II. *page* 16, *line* 5, *read* ſtretches forth—*p.* 25, *l.* 19, *for* fertile *r.* futile—*p.* 30, *l.* 24, *for* proſpect *r.* proſpects—*p.* 47, *l.* 20, *for* tinge *r.* hinge—*p.* 51, *l.* 6, *r.* of the preſent—*p.* 81, *l.* 10, *dele* at—*p.* 136, *l.* 10, *dele* that—*p.* 177, *l.* 3, *for* operations *r.* operation; *after* cauſes *dele* ,—*p.* 221, *l.* 16, *for* die *r.* dies—*p.* 279, *l.* 17, *for* moment *r.* movement.

LETTER XXVII.

To the Rev^d. Father FABIO MARETTI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is a terrible thing for a traveller to paſs over a country which has not had its moſt remarkable rivers, hills, and ſituations, deſcribed by poets who have written in ſome language univerſally known. It would be an excellent relief at a dull moment to fill up a letter to a correſpondent with quotations of fine poeſy, after having deſcribed the place in proſe; but to what purpoſe would all the elegant deſcriptions which have been given of the Thames, its foreſts, proſpects, and paradiſaic ſcenes, be tranſcribed for your eye, who underſtand not this language?

A thouſand years hence, when the writers of this nation become like the Claſſics of ours, and Engliſh as much ſtudied at Rome as the Latin language has been by this people, a traveller may fill up a volume, like Addiſon, whom you have heard of, with quotations from the ancients, as they will be then call'd, and be admired for wit which is not his own. The time may come when the Thames and Severn, rivers of England will be known in Italy by thouſands, their ſtreams renown'd, and the names of Tyber, Po, and Clytumnus, their preſent rivals, be forgotten in the countries through which they flow. The tomb of Shakeſpeare will be viſited with as much adoration as that of Virgil, and with as juſt reaſon, if genius can give merit to human nature. Clarendon will be remember'd as Livy, and Milton rever'd as the Homer of old Greece. Bacon and Newton adored as the ſuperior productions of the creation. Alas! I live a thouſand years too ſoon to travel in this country with eclat. This gives me no other pain, but that of being deprived of enriching this letter with ſomething worthy your regard; however at the time of the milennium, when we ſhall be all upon earth

again,

again, and underſtand all languages, I ſhall make another voyage on purpoſe for that reaſon.

UNDER the preſent circumſtances there can be nothing ſaid of this country, more than that the rivers flow amidſt the faireſt meadows enriched with lowing herds and flocks, adorned with aſpiring elms, and cover'd with the fineſt verdure. The hills are crowned with perennial oaks, the golden corn waves to the breathing breeze, and tho' no olive-trees or vineyards grace the ſoil, the trees are loaded with the ruddy pear and yellow apple, preſage of liquour that rivals the old Falernian or Sabine wine. Plenty burſts forth to every view; a cleanlineſs unknown to the peaſants of any nation, is viſible in every village; the country ſeems yet untainted; the ſmiling face of liberty ſhines amongſt the inhabitants, and a wealth which no people ever boaſted, of their rank, is to be found amongſt the farmers of this iſle.

WITH theſe people, integrity is yet to be found; they love the country which gave them

birth, and breathe a ſpirit becoming the Romans in their days of untainted virtue, too ſteady to be ſeduced by miniſterial influence; and thus, being above all temptation to their country's ruin, are forbidden to bear or poſſeſs arms for its defence. Nothing is ſo dreadful to a corrupted adminiſtration as untainted probity.

But why am I painting the ſituation of theſe people, or upbraiding the miniſtry that undoes them? I am an alien here; what charm has this land for me? Alas! it is or ought to be the univerſal affliction of mankind to think that without ſome ſudden intervention, the roſy cheek of health muſt fade in pining ſlavery; the heart, which at preſent prompts the ſpirit of mirth in evening ſongs beneath the ſhady beach, muſt be loaded with anxiety, and ſighs burſt from that boſom, that now breathes the voice of jollitry! Such the dreary moment paints them to my imagination.

Amongst the rural inhabitants of all the nations I have ſeen, none equal the natives of this country; the farmer has a liberal air, and

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the females a beauty not to be found in any other place. The peaſants of Italy have a famiſhed mein and poverty of aſpect. The French the ſame, or even worſe; they ſeem another race of mortals from the people of condition in their reſpective countries; nothing of this kind appears in England, all is of another caſt.

METHINKS the very horſes and cattle participate of this ſtate, and have an air of freedom not to be ſeen in thoſe of other nations; at leaſt they are handſomer than the animals of our country. Perhaps it is that prevalent love of beauty in us which creates this ſentiment of freedom in their favour.

WHEREVER we paſs, there are no remains but thoſe of abbies, ruined houſes, where once the church triumphed in ſplendour and magnificence. Alas! the fatted ox comes no more to theſe habitations, and the ſleek monk bleſſes the teeming board no more, nor quaffs the ſparkling liquor down his roſey throat! Such revolutions have attended the ſons of St. Peter in this kingdom.

THE good ſenſe of the common people is amazing to thoſe ſtrangers who viſit this country: in all converſation where they can be ſuppoſed to underſtand the ſubject at all, they ſhew a degree of knowledge not to be found amongſt the peaſants of any nation; the meaneſt labourer has ſomething to ſay in his favour, which cannot be met with in any other place.

THIS advantage they draw from being accuſtomed to think for themſelves; their minds are naturally inquiſitive; and not being ſlaviſhly dependant on prieſt or maſter, there is a liberality of thinking amongſt them all, and a probity not eaſily conceived: the poor of the country-villages, who gain their daily bread, are extremely honeſt, and have not yet loſt the influence of religion. Liberty effects this amongſt ſmall numbers and ruins great.

IN London amongſt the lower claſs all is anarchy, drunkenneſs, and thievery; in the country good order, ſobriety and honeſty, unleſs in manufacturing towns, where the reſemblance of London is more conſpicuous. No country can be

be more inviting to paſs the ſummer in than this; the heats are temperate, the verdure in the fields the moſt brilliant, and continues through the year; even the autumn is far from being diſagreeable; but alas! the dreary winter makes me ſigh for the ſunny ſhores of Bajæ; the ſerenity of ſky, and tepid breezes of that place, added to this clime, would make the whole Elyſium. Adieu,

I am yours moſt affectionately.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NO where is the word *liberty* mention'd with ſo much ardour as in England, and no where leſs underſtood. The general meaning of it, as it is received in this nation, is the power of each man doing what he pleaſes, and preventing the reſt from doing the ſame thing: this is rather ſovereignty than freedom; and as people know in this country, that property and title beget a kind of deſpotiſm, it is a common thing to add in the advertiſement of the ſale of an eſtate, as a recommendatory conſideration, a nota bene, "No Lord within ten miles of it."

THIS deſire of liberty ſo conſtantly in the mouth of man, and yet in his practice ſo little to be found with an inclination to allow it to others, has often made me reflect whether this was ſo natural a paſſion as has been aſſerted? and

if the love of power was not more original and native, than that of freedom?

But after ſome reflection I am led to believe the love of power, is nothing more than the love of liberty carried beyond its due proportion, in the laws of ſociety and nature. Men in general, at leaſt in this kingdom, ſcarce think themſelves free as long as they find any oppoſition to their deſires; every impulſe of paſſion that meets an obſtacle, is conceived as an objection to their freedom: a man therefore fanſies that independancy and liberty are the ſame things; for that reaſon he muſt endeavour to ſubdue all around him to his inclinations; for no ambitious man thinks himſelf free as long as others can check him in his attempts. Thus the mind ſteals from that liberty which belongs to all, to an independancy which belongs to none; and from thence to that of power over others for the ſake of being quite independant; and then it terminates in deſpotiſm, if no oppoſition deſtroy its deſign. Tyranny itſelf ſeems to make this progreſs in the minds of men: thus abſolute power ſeems to be a combination

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of two objects of the ſame paſſion, love of ſelf and liberty.

THE truth of this ſeems to be confirmed by obſervations on mankind every where. Tyrants have generally ſhewn the ſtrongeſt ſelf-love of all others; in avarice ſometimes, at others, in plundering for the ſake of profuſion on themſelves; in murders, thro' fear of the deſtruction of ſelf. Thus it may be I think fairly ſaid, that the deſire of power is the love of liberty mixt with the exceſs of ſelf-love.

IF this be true, it ſhould be the purſuit of all free ſtates as much as poſſible to endeavour to throw the paſſion of ſelf-love into diſgrace, to brand with ſarcaſm the miſer's forehead, and keep the incenſe on the altars of generoſity and liberality eternally burning. A king, of all demeaning diſpoſitions, can have none ſo criminal as perſonal avarice, to his nation; his heart ſhould be open to the men of ſcience and men of art; and that truly royal ſpirit of giving to the meritorious, ſhould gain him the univerſal affection of a people; which it will never effect, if it be given indiſcriminately without diſtinction: yet avarice

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is even worſe than diſſipation, and is the moſt unroyal of all the qualities of the heart; without the ſpirit of generoſity, with juſtice, mercy, underſtanding, and all other virtues, a crowned head receives no applauſe, nothing more than a frigid approbation from the voice of fame.

Now tho' all men may be ſaid to be born free, yet none can be ſaid to be born independant; that never was the ſtate of nature ſince the firſt race became men; all that is in liberty is a right to that which is *the common lot* of mankind; the child is born in a ſtate of dependancy on the parents, and even when grown up, in nations where there is the leaſt property. Amongſt the Indians men are not independant; there is a due ſubmiſſion to the man of the firſt underſtanding, to courage, to ſtrength, and many other qualities of the ſoul and body, which naturally take off the independancy of moſt, tho' not the liberty. And tho' theſe individuals ſo endowed may ſeem leſs dependant than the reſt, yet numbers render them dependant alſo: independant no man can be, in a nation which ſtands in need of the qualities and capacities of particular men to ſupport it; yet he is free becauſe

they have no right to deprive him of his poſſeſſions.

FROM theſe attributes of ſuperior underſtanding, ſuperior courage, and ſuperior ſtrength, in uncivilized ſtates is derived the authority which one man has over another; this is naturally yielded to him by thoſe who taſte the advantage that he is of to the community; thence aroſe the ideas of chiefs and kings in the ſavage nations, from a ſenſe of ſuperior abilities and a ſenſe of gratitude mixt, and yet without loſs of liberty. In countries long civilized the ſame exalted talents, added to thoſe of generoſity and many other humane qualities which wealth brings, or ſhould bring into faſhion, will obtain an authority undiſputed; and the great people, exerting thoſe qualifications, will find that men, from their dependant ſtate in nature, let their country be ever ſo free, will pay that due ſubordination which is eſtabliſhed in the firſt principles of all things.

YET if they chuſe another method, and ſtrive to render themſelves independant, by exerting the powers which riches procure them againſt their

their fellow-countrymen, by keeping them in continual fear; the mind, inſtead of acknowledging an authority in thoſe deſpotic tempers, deteſts the cauſe, and only lies ſilent till ſome occaſion offers of exerting its endeavours, againſt this which they feel with ſo much anguiſh.

KINGS then, tho' born to power, ſhould ſupport it with generoſity, and making that which they have a right to by the laws and cuſtoms of their country, to proceed from the natural diſpoſitions of human kind, obtain an authority in the heart of a nation, which is not to be purchaſed by any other means.

IT was this diſpoſition in Lewis the fourteenth which made him the darling of the French; he inſtituted honors, rewarded merit, ſupported and cheriſhed ſciences and arts, was polite to all, and thus became the idol of that people whom his ambition and wars brought more than once to die without regret, of the ſword, famine and diſeaſe.

IF any thing can create genius, it muſt be ſuch a diſpoſition; when the rewards for excellent productions come from thoſe hands which are

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the moſt eſteemed by the ſons of men: if it cannot create genius, it begets the next of all things to it; it animates a common ſoul to moments of ſuperior conception, and paſſages of exalted underſtanding. That the Engliſh nation has richly deſerved encouragement from their princes, is ſurely indiſputable; yet to this hour there is not an eſtabliſhment in their favour. The miniſtry ſeem to ſhun men of great ſenſe, and liberality has fled the land. No man of letters is acceptable to the great, they look on him as a kind of ſatire on their actions, and feeling within their own vacuity, are by no means pleaſed with beholding in another what they want themſelves.

THIS is not the practice of other nations: men of letters are received with peculiar honors in France and Italy by the nobility; and by that means the liberal behaviour begets an authority over the man of ſcience, which makes *him* the dependant of that perſon, and unites his knowledge with the other's power and intereſt.

THIS management is well underſtood in France, where miniſters, and other great men, apply the talents

talents of men of letters to their uſe and the public advantage; and thus liberality begets authority, and every idea of arbitrary power is loſt. From this it is that thoſe who live in France, tho' their government is more deſpotic than the Engliſh, have more apparent freedom and eaſe than is to be ſeen in this iſland.

THE exertion of power is ſeen there in nothing but in caſes of much ill behaviour; and all that which might be carried by the ſuperiority of one man above another, by a kind of force which would make it arbitrary, is converted by politeneſs into that ſenſe of authority and dependance, which is natural for men to have over and from one another: this being the cuſtom univerſally in uſe in that country, whatever may be the eſtabliſhment, it is really and in fact liberty: and after all the examination which I can make, from the ſecurity of property, eaſe of mind, and gaiety of temper of the two people, taking into the account the deſire which almoſt all Engliſhmen have of poſſeſſing power by fear or force, and Frenchmen of obtaining authority by politeneſs and liberality; I aſſure you that I think the citizens of Paris as free as the citizens of London,

London, and the French as happy in that reſpect as the Britons.

At leaſt men of letters are happier in that city than in this; and tho' the lamp of learning is near expiring in England, yet no one ſtretches his hand to recruit it with freſh oil: the flame, I believe, quivers already; I ſhall ſee its total extinction before I leave England; after which, I ſhall only tarry to attend its remains and behold it quietly inurned, make a ſmall epitaph, inſtitute a maſs to be ſaid for its repoſe, and fly to your arms in Rome; and thus end my life where it began. Adieu, I am

Yours moſt ſincerely.

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LETTER XXIX.

To the Reverend Father LORENZO FRANCIOSINI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

YESTERDAY amuſing myſelf with a walk in that church where the monuments of illuſtrious men of this nation are moſtly placed, amongſt others I remarked that of the great Newton, where, in a bas-relief, the other orbs of this ſolar ſyſtem are weighed by boys againſt the ſun, on a ſtillyard.

THIS naturally led me to think on the fate of thoſe philoſophies, which from the earlieſt account of times have come down to us thro' Ariſtotle to Deſcartes, and Newton; each of the former exploded by all living writers, unleſs you except Monſr. Fontenelle; and the latter attacked by the late Mr. Hutchinſon and his followers, a ſect of enthuſiaſtic philoſophers, who fanſying they have found in the hiſtory of Moſes, the beſt ſyſtem of the heavens and natural philoſophy, decry all others as deluſive.

THIS reflection led me naturally to conſider the unſtable ſtate of truth, as well as that of faſhion, and thence the feeble condition of the human mind, as it is generally found to exiſt in moſt beings of our ſpecies. The ſyſtem of Ptolomy, and the natural hiſtory of Ariſtotle and Pliny, were followed and received as undoubted truth for many ages. Copernicus and Deſcartes driving theſe from the opinions of mankind, won the whole world to their manner of conceiving things; the firſt of theſe remains generally received, and the philoſophy of the latter, which was deſigned to explain the revolutions of the planets, is, as I have already ſaid, almoſt totally exploded. Fontenelle alone, at ninety-ſix, like a ſepulchral lamp, remains quivering over the dead body.

IF we ſhould ſcrutinize too ſeverely into the minds of men, how contemptibly muſt we think of their capacities; they have followed the different profeſſors of each philoſophy by thouſands; embracing error, not under the idea of an object of belief, but of reaſon; dignifying that with the name of abſolute truth, which at

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preſent appears to be abſolute falſehood. What is this ſupreme reaſon of man, that is ſo eaſily deluded? or is there any truth belonging to reaſon in man, the reſult of numbers excepted, beyond that which is to be found in any other faculty?

If we ſhould judge from the analogy and experience of paſt times, we muſt conclude, there is no ſuch thing as truth; becauſe all that has been diſcovered and received anciently as true, is now known and received as falſe. Every philoſopher has ſunk into obſcurity, with his ſyſtem; and all reverence for him, and that, vaniſhed together with time.

Perhaps the day will come, when ſome fertile imagination may ingeniouſly dethrone this hypotheſis of the great Newton, and prove that immortality belongs no more to ſyſtems, than to men.

Whether this be true or not, the experience of paſt ages, and the long unſettled ſtate of truth, ſhould teach us to examine with caution, and pronounce with modeſty; either on other people's opinion, or our own.

LET us imagine, as probably it is, that the ſyſtem of this amazing man, is the true one of the univerſe; we may admire indeed, that wonderful ſagacity which could penetrate ſuch abſtruſe matters; and yet, how ſhort in utility and comprehenſion is this degree of knowledge, to that of a legiſlator.

NEWTON has diſcovered that the planets and ſun, perhaps all other planets and ſuns, are counterpoiſed and attracted by one another. The ſyſtem of nature was before this diſcovery fixed, and the whole revelation is the principle which moves theſe orbs, and the laws which they obſerve. In human nature, the ſubtilty of diſcovering that paſſions, reaſon, ſenſes, faith, and imagination in man, counterpoiſe one another, is not ſufficicient, tho' equally difficult; all the objects which influence each, muſt be proportioned and applied to make ſociety proceed happily and well.

IS not the genius which is capable of ſuch force and efficacy, as much beyond that of Newton, as his was beyond the conception of other

mathematicians and philoſophers of that kind? the one only explains the ſyſtem of natural bodies as they are guided in their courſe, and the other creates a ſyſtem by which nature is to be governed, in the conduct and commerce of men: one has diſcovered how nature proceeds, yet ſupplies no materials; the other muſt know her operations, and ſupply objects alſo. Whether there ever has been any legiſlator ſo perfect in his kind, as the great Newton was in his, pray tell me in your next letter, you who have ſtudied him with ſuch amazing application, and know mankind ſo intimately?

METHINKS greatneſs of genius of any kind, can never be ſufficiently admired or encouraged; when we find from the hiſtory of all nations, how few men have ever poſſeſſed the faculties of invention and contriving new probable ſyſtems, from the known powers and properties of nature; is it not ſurprizing that their reward has been ſo ſmall, and their eſteem ſcarce taken place, till they were beyond all beneficial influence, from its good or ill reception?

PERHAPS if a father had the power of obtaining, what degree of genius he would chuſe to be given to his ſon, he would wiſh for the moſt exalted, as moſt likely to ſucceed in the affairs of this life; and yet I verily believe, that an inferior degree is that which promiſes faireſt to make its way in the world.

A very ſuperior genius is too much above the general comprehenſion, to be known immediately; the ſize of the underſtanding is like that of the bodies of men, each extends to a certain degree, and no farther; by that means it comes to paſs, that whatever is extremely above the common underſtanding paſſes unremarked, it is out of reach but to few: there are not men of genius enough at one time in a kingdom, capable of extending to his conceptions, and to create it a ſtable reputation; the author dies before his work meets applauſe, or receives the reward or praiſe due to his merit.

WHEREAS the foremoſt of the ſecond rate of underſtandings, writes to the conception and

apprehenſion of all; his fame, like flame in dry ſtraw, blazes, dazzles, ſpreads, and expires in a very ſhort time; the former beginning by ſlow degrees in fuel difficultly ſet on fire, is long in ſpreading its influence, but is laſting and cheriſhing when it has once taken firm poſſeſſion.

THUS for the mortal ſelf and ſhort-lived honor, a middling degree of genius is the moſt uſeful; but for the immortality of fame the latter. Will a father then rather deſire exalted fame when his ſon ſhall be no more, or leſs of that and ſucceſs together? It has been ſaid, that Bacon's genius was conſidered as wild and romantic, as it appeared in his writings, to the wits of thoſe days; and that knowledge which excelled all the world, and almoſt exceeded humanity, could not obtain him ſuſtenance from the prince on the throne, after he had proved that he was ſubjected to the foibles of man. Milton's paradiſe loſt paſt unobſerved, till Mr. Dryden called the attention of the world upon it; Shakeſpeare was poſtponed to Ben Johnſon during his life, and his works ſo little eſteemed, that they never engaged the author to give a correct edition, the whole being taken from the

prompter's books. Sir Iſaac Newton himſelf was not at all conſidered, till ſome foreign mathematician, I think Huygens, had read his book long after it was printed; and diſcovered to the world the treaſures it contained: theſe were men of the greateſt genius.

At the ſame time, Mr. Addiſon who wanted taſte in all things, as his remarks on Bologna in Italy may convince you; where he ſays, the three moſt curious things in that city, are a ſtair-caſe, a medal, and a St. Cecilia, painted by Raphael; preferring the two firſt, and not once mentioning thoſe inimitable paintings of the Carrachi and their diſciples; he appears a baby in his pretenſions to knowledge of a ſuperior kind, that of defending chriſtianity, and explaining the powers and pleaſures of imagination; and a ſchool-boy in ſublime poetry; this man received applauſe beyond all other writers during his life; as did Mr. Pope, who tho' an excellent poet, was in the nature of his writings infinitely inferior to Shakeſpeare and Milton.

The underſtanding and productions of theſe modern poets of this iſland, are ſuch as are adapted

adapted to the capacities of the number, and thus pleaſing every where, bequeathed their authors an encomium much beyond their deſert.

TIME however is doing juſtice to theſe men; the former grow yet more and more adored, the rock is immoveable on which they ſtand; whilſt the hill of ſand which ſupported the other, is mouldering away beneath the feet of their reputation, and deſerting them every minute.

To this incapacity of comprehending that which belongs to true genius, I imagine it is, that the moſt able miniſters are ſeldom employed in a ſtate. Thoſe who ſhould chooſe, cannot penetrate into thoſe intuitive truths which they lay before them: what is not underſtood by their capacities appears like ſcheming, nonſenſe, fairy land, or viſion; and thus the moſt able heads are prevented from ſaving their country, whilſt ſuch ſpecious and fertile capacities as the late Lord Bolingbroke's, catch every ear and give their poſſeſſors place and power; like fly-traps, round which the inſects hum, and ſtick at laſt. The only man of late years, that could ſerve this

this kingdom as a miniſter, has been but little employed and ſoon rejected; thoſe who buzz in royal ears, did not conceive the deſigns of his ſuperior genius; or rather jealous, and preferring themſelves to their country's welfare, duped their maſter and the public good to their reſentments.

Such is the fate of ſuperior genius: It is my wiſh and ambition, *ut ſit mens ſana in corpore ſano*, and a heart warmed with gratitude for your goodneſs.

I am yours moſt affectionately.

LETTER XXX.

To the Reverend Father DIODATO FRANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NOT long ſince on a journey into that part of this kingdom, which is called Wales, from whence the eldeſt ſons of the kings of Great-Britain take their titles, I found more remains of ancient vaſſalage amongſt the common people, and a greater ſimplicity of manners, than is to be met with in England.

THE language is yet ſpoken by the preſent people, which was in uſe in the time of Cæſar's invaſion; and, if you believe the natives, as it was by our firſt parents in paradiſe; it has not an ill ſound when put into verſe, as it was repeated to my ears by a gentleman of the country; yet I believe, it would be difficult for a ſtranger to acquire it; particularly an Italian. Nothing can be more different than the pronunciation of theſe two languages; the words in our tongue terminating in vowels, and thoſe in this having ſcarce

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any in uſe in their alphabet. For this reaſon ſtrength makes the excellence in the Welch, as ſweetneſs does in the preſent Roman; and it ſeems impoſſible for a ſtranger to obtain a true pronunciation, without practiſing with ſomething boiling hot in his mouth. There is a ſingular cuſtom amongſt the people of this part of the iſland, which is extremely uſeful, and worthy imitation: Whenever two ſervants have an inclination to marry, they make it known to their maſters, and he to his friends, who all ſend them ſomething to begin houſekeeping; beſides this, there are in different parts, perſons who are called bidders, from the uſe they make of them, who are ſent round from houſe to houſe to their whole acquaintance.

When a couple is to be wedded, there is one choſen on each ſide; they are dreſt in their beſt apparel, and with a long ſtaff to which are tyed knots of ribbands, their hats being decorated with the ſame finery, are ſent out as ambaſſadors. Theſe are the public orators, and choſen from the beſt ſpeakers amongſt the common people, which office they always preſerve. Deck'd out in this pomp they proceed two different

rent ways, and entering into the houſes, where they are ordered to go, make their ſpeeches much in this manner:

DAVID and Mary intend to marry on ſuch a day; their father and mother, David and Mary, and their relations, have ſent me to bid you to the wedding; whatever you ſhall give them at that time, ſhall be reſtored at your nuptials (if they are unmarried), or to thoſe of your friends, when they ſhall be married; and in their names I bid you a good day.

BY this means it often happens, that if the couple which intends being married, has lived in reputable ſervice, they ſhall receive a hundred guineas to begin the world; and from this ſum down to thirty is the general receipt.

TWO days before the wedding they meet together in the houſe where this couple is to live, and bring their gifts, when they paſs the evening in merryment, and dance; and, what is ſomething ſurprizing, they all perform that exerciſe with an eaſe and grace, which I have not ſeen amongſt any peaſants in Europe.

They then meet at the ſame houſe on the nuptial day; whence thy proceed on horſeback to the church, two women upon ſome horſes, two men upon others, a man and a woman, women before men, void of all order: Before them is the beſt muſic they can get, the harp always, which being ſuſpended about the harper's ſhoulders; he plays as the horſe trots along, as faſt as he can, a random ſtruming of the ſtrings. The harp and St. David are the moſt venerable objects of the Welch people; they are great lovers of muſic and ſinging; and have one poet very renouned, whoſe works they ſing at all feſtivals.

In this manner they ride with great ſwiftneſs to the church to be married; the haſte they make is to ſignify the impetuoſity of their love for each other. The ceremony being finiſhed, the company returns to make merry, which continues till evening: When having put the new couple to bed, they retire below again; and after paſſing an hour in mirth, and making caudel for the bridegroom, they return again into the chamber, and carry him this invigorating liquor, as a reſtorative, conſider'd highly neceſſary in this moment;

moment; not forgetting a ſpecies of joking, which will not well bear being tranſlated into Italian.

THIS is the Welch way of marrying amongſt the common people and ſervants; by which you ſee the firſt difficulties of coming together are ſurmounted, marriage much encouraged; and this without taking any thing from another, which he or his are not to have again when he pleaſes to demand it: This is converting ſmall ſums to great uſe, and drawing advantage from numbers of poor people, no where practiſed but in this part of the iſland.

IT would be a cuſtom highly uſeful for the poor of Italy, where a prieſt might exerciſe this function of a bidder with great eclat; and the public be conſiderably benefited by this ceremony. It will render people leſs timid in coming to the care of a family, and repeople the country more than any other encouragement I can think of; and this without taxing any one, a matter of great conſideration in all public benefits. This cuſtom, good as it is, is not uſed by the Engliſh, perhaps not known to them.

THEY

THEY have another very ſingular cuſtom, which is that of covering for a whole year, the pourtrait of a perſon who is lately dead, with a mourning veil of black tranſparent crape, a kind of wearing weeds for himſelf: there were ſome hundred prints of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, a great favourite in this part of the kingdom, hung with crape after his death; ſcarce a houſe in North Wales without one of them, and in ſome, one in every room, in others one in every pannel; from thence you may judge of his power, whilſt alive. He was always complimented by his countrymen with the title of king in Wales. The country is in moſt parts mountainous, yet not ſterile; the hills being covered with graſs and flocks of ſheep; it ſeems there were herds of goats formerly in great plenty; which animal, I know not the reaſon, is held in great contempt by the Engliſh, notwithſtanding his beard, that type of wiſdom; and is applied as a piece of ridicule and ſarcaſm by them, when they would ſatirize a Welchman; this ſatire has almoſt extirpated the race of goats. Many of the vallies are fertile, and the rivers fine; the proſpect yield to nothing in Italy; falling waters, ruin'd caſtles, woods, lawns and rivers,

rivers, diſtant oceans, riſing hills; all conſpire to make it the ſtudy of a landſcape-painter; no country yields a greater variety than this, to men who love to be entertain'd by thoſe rural pleaſures.

YET for one Engliſh gentleman who croſſes the river Severn to ſee this part of his nation, there are a hundred who travel into Italy, and neglect being acquainted with their fellow-inhabitants. It is reputable to have ſeen the caſcades of Tivirone, and not know thoſe of their own country. The peaſants, tho' as free by law as thoſe of England, retain yet a great deal of that obedience to their landlords, which was paid the Barons of old; and that fierté ſo much attributed to the Engliſh, is yet ten times more viſible in this part amongſt men of fortune, than in England. The wife in Wales is ſcarce more than a houſekeeper, and the huſband much a ſovereign.

THE natives are hoſpitable, and entertain ſtrangers with a liberal and not unpolite air. Here you may live, with one precaution, in great plenty; you muſt remember, that your political principles

coincide thoroughly with thoſe of the maſter of the houſe, or perhaps the evening ſacrifice to Bacchus may procure you an expulſion ten miles diſtance from an habitable houſe at midnight, if you ſhould differ from him in his notions of ſtate affairs. The Chevalier de St. George has his health often drank in this country; which is moſt certainly a blooming promiſe of ſucceſs, after more than ſixty years exile.

THE peaſants wear no ſhoes about their houſes, and in their common travelling the roads they carry them in their hands, and waſh their feet near the towns which they are travelling to, when they put on them, and their ſtockings; many of them however have none. And yet, theſe poor creatures would think themſelves doom'd to perpetual ſlavery, if they were obliged to wear wooden ſhoes; the ideas of wooden ſhoes, ſlavery, and French, being all link'd together in their imaginations; they would ſcarce prefer them to confinement without, and as ſoon wear chains, as preſerve their feet from injury by theſe contrivances; the flattering idea of being free, tho' barefooted, gives them no little conſolation amidſt as much ſlavery as poverty and depend-

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ance can bequeath; except in imagination, the place, perhaps, where that and all our pleaſures begin and end.

THERE is one remarkable and very eſſential difference, between theſe people and the Scotch; the firſt defend their countrymen and country in converſation, and retire if poſſible to live amongſt their relations, when they have ſaved ſome little fortune in England; the latter ſpeak highly of Scotland and Scotchmen, but never chooſe to ſee the land from whence they came. I am more inclined to think the Welchman ſincere, than the Scot, in his attachment to his country; and for this reaſon, the latter being preſbyterians, from which race I have remarked hypocriſy is almoſt inſeparable; the highlanders, who are epiſcopalians, reſemble the Welch.

THE inhabitants are extremely ſubject to anger, and to take revenge by law; they reſemble amongſt the Engliſh, the Normans in France; their paſſions and parties precipitate them into very ſtrange deciſions in their public trials, where

they are jurymen; inſomuch, that all diſputes of conſequence are carried into the cities of England to be decided by the Engliſh juries, who have no partiality for either ſide in the debate.

THIS is what I have collected for you in Wales, and tho' not ſo faſhionable, nor the voyage ſo dangerous as going to meaſure the pyramids of Egypt, viſiting the catacombs and cataracts of the Nile; yet perhaps, the Welch cuſtom of weddings, being put in execution in Italy, would impart as much utility, as all P——'s voyage, which you aſſure me you have lately laboured thro'; I imagine by way of penance, inſtead of laſhing yourſelf with a whip of thongs; ſurely your lent muſt have been ſevere, if as you tell me you abſtained during that time from all good ſenſe, and lived on ſuch terrible meagre.

INDEED I could ſend you many drawings of ruins from this part, but alas! we abound with too many of them in our own country; and tho' I venerate the remains of ancient palaces and temples; I am enemy enough to that taſte,

taſte, to wiſh every ſtone of old Rome converted into ſome uſeful and habitable building, and the city in its former glory and extent, tho' all the inſcriptions and ſculptures were demoliſhed. Heaven defend this and me from the eyes and tongue of vertu. I am,

Yours moſt ſincerely.

LETTER XXXI.

To the Reverend Father VINCENZO SPINELLO *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IN this country profuſion is luxury, and whatever coſts much money is always extremely polite; for that reaſon it is polite to dine with the nobility, where you pay the ſervants for ten times as much as you eat. An open table, in this city, would ruin every man of a ſmall eſtate to be entertained at it.

ONE would be led to imagine, that the Engliſh were determined to deſtroy all ſubordination, by the treatment of their ſervants; they give them greater wages than in any country on earth; they are better fed than all others; even the common maid ſervants muſt have their tea twice a day, in all the parade of quality; they make it their bargain at firſt: this very article amounts to as much as the wages of ſervants in Italy.

BESIDES this, the money which is given to the men ſervants by viſiters, makes the place of a domeſtic a more conſiderable thing, than many ſmall trades; this expence however is not the greateſt miſchief: the ſervants have very little attachment to thoſe they ſerve; this diſpoſition ſeems to take place, from the miniſter, to the ſervants of ſervants of ſervants; ſelf is the ſole motive, and that never makes a true union between thoſe who ſerve, and thoſe who are ſerved. That intereſt which keeps them with you, will in a greater degree ſeparate them from you; a ſervant ſecretly gets a better place, that is, where there are better vales, than with his preſent maſter, and leaves him in a month; this is not eſteemed a fault, becauſe it is become the general acknowledgment, that intereſt ought to be the ſole ruling principle of human kind. The ſervant hears this whilſt he ſtands behind his maſter's chair; he ſees him practiſe it in life, and like a good pupil follows his example. This method of leaving a maſter ſuddenly being no objection, if the ſervant be tolerably good he finds another place, and is little ſolicitous about plea-

ſing thoſe he ſerves; it is from other hands he receives his chief income, and the maſter is but little regarded.

In Italy, ſervants having no dependance but on thoſe they ſerve, muſt ſtudy to obey and pleaſe their maſters; that domeſtic who changes his place often, loſes his character, and is reduced to great extremity. He who continues long in one houſe, has beſides his preſent wages the hopes of a future ſupply, by a penſion in old age, or at the death of his maſter: thus the French and Italians, tho' not half ſo well paid as the Engliſh in their wages, not conſidering their vales, are ten times better, and more obedient in their ſervice; they ſtrive to pleaſe for the ſake of being approved of, and finding proviſion when they are no longer able to work. Whereas, an Engliſh ſervant knowing he has no future expectations from his maſter, enjoys the preſent time, diſſipates, and finds no ſolace by an annual penſion in his declining days. In my opinion, thoſe of our nation and France are happier than the Engliſh; they have every thing for their ſupport which is neceſſary, and the ambition of their maſters clothes them well;

their hearts are at eaſe, and their actions encouraged by knowing that faithful ſervice always obtains a reward for old age.

I NEED not write a farther comment, or notes, to illuſtrate the truth of what has been ſaid; to prove that the Engliſh nobility and gentry ruin their being well ſerved, by a licentious and miſtaken habit of ſuffering their ſervants to receive money from any other perſon but themſelves. In fact, the domeſtic ſcarce conceives himſelf the menial ſervant of him who ſupplies him with his daily bread and apparel, and in general has very little good-will towards him.

FROM this one evil habit of giving money to ſervants, the nobility of no nation appear ſo mean as the Engliſh; my lord looks on whilſt his gueſt diſcharges the houſe, by paying the ſervants; and no ſervants are in any compariſon ſo inſolent and inattentive in their ſervice, becauſe they know that it is not his lordſhip's hands from which they receive their money.

THE reformation of theſe abuſes will arrive with the general reformation of the nation; when

when the public funds being no more able to ſupply the miniſterial demand, the whole takes a new turn, and the want of money brings purer manners and more œconomy.

THIS is not ſo far off as the day of judgment, to my eyes. The kingdom appears to me like thoſe fruits which are extremely fair to the eye, and rotten at the core; the malady has begun from the heart; or like a body, which has long lain interred and unmoved, which, appearing firm and ſubſtantial to the view, is ſure to tumble into duſt the very firſt ſhake which it receives.

THO' an alien and ſojourner in the land, I ſincerely pray, that this may be prevented; there are yet an infinity of worthy people remaining amongſt thoſe who are neither the very higheſt nor very loweſt; and indeed ſome in the firſt, tho' they are hindered from their country's ſervice, and as it were exiled for their virtues. Adieu,

I am yours moſt affectionately.

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LETTER XXXII.

To the Reverend Father BATISTA GUARINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is not in medicine alone, that quackery takes place in this iſland above all others; it is in every other art and ſcience; the painters even make their fortune in proportion, as they mix more or leſs of that with their profeſſion and colours; ſome chuſe a new manner of colouring, others of painting drapery, and one who would paint his figures upſide-down, would ſucceed to a miracle; but laſtly here is a prodigy arrived from Paris; a wonder who has carried all before him, and all this by dint of beard. This man being extremely well acquainted with the prevailing paſſion of this nation, and their manner of reaſoning, which is, that if a man is extraordinary in any thing, he muſt be in all; has made the beſt uſe of a beard, that any man has made of it ſince the days of Adam. He goes dreſt in the Perſian or Turkiſh habit, with this type of wiſdom reaching to his middle.

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This ſingularity of dreſs has given him an air of ſuperiority, and credit of being a ſingular good painter; he has had double the price of all others; and yet, if it was not for his beard, he would not be a better painter, nay not ſo good, as many who reſide in London. Thus, whilſt he gets five and twenty guineas for a three quarters length; Soldé, who is as good at leaſt as any in this kingdom, is glad to get half that money: The firſt has as many as he can paint, and Soldé has not ſo many as he ought. At preſent the people of England ſeem to be more captivated with what is new, than what is extraordinary; and are more pleaſed with ſingularity in the perſon who produces any thing in arts and ſcience, than with the production itſelf: it is this which has made this painter's performances ſo valuable. They have meaſured the value of his works by the length of his beard, and conclude as much in favour of the excellency of the one as the longitude of the other; it is the rarity of a painter with a beard, that has drawn him the reputation of a great maſter in his art. This is the firſt time I have known beards being the type of any thing but wiſdom: If he painted

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in oil, I ſhould imagine he made his bruſhes of his beard, and ſucceeded by virtue of that advantage; but he paints in craions.

In other parts of polite ſtudies, the ſame manner of thinking has often prevail'd; here is now an inſtance of a threſher, a very honeſt man indeed, who was made a divine and librarian to the late queen at Richmond, becauſe he had found out the method of threſhing words into verſes; the excellency of the work is not conſider'd, it is the wonder of a peaſant's being a poet, which gained him his living and honours, during which time many others who were good poets, were ſtarving without the leaſt reward.

Besides this man, here is another mechanic, who is the candidate for the Laurel, after the preſent poet Laureat: This man has written a very indifferent tragedy, which has had great ſucceſs, becauſe it was the work of a bricklayer.

In fact, this appears to me to be extremely mortifying to men of genius; their works are not attended with any eſteem or honor, becauſe they are the productions of men deſtined to ſtudy,

ſtudy, whilſt thoſe of a threſher or bricklayer are admired, becauſe coming from their hands. At the ſame time, it is no ſmall reflection on thoſe who ſhould ſupport letters, that their patronage is beſtowed on ſuch underſtandings, and denied to men of true merit. This encouragement has already robb'd the world of two uſeful men to make two uſeleſs ones; and who knows where it may end? Humanity would be apt to conceive that this ariſes from want of taſte, not diſtinguiſhing what true merit is, and malice from a mean jealouſy which will not encourage it.

In every kind of work, the excellency of the workman in general is not conſider'd here, as in France and Italy; the common artiſt is paid almoſt as well as the beſt, and what can only be accompliſh'd by one in a million, is as little eſteemed, as that which can be performed by one in ten.

For this reaſon it is that the moſt exquiſite works in graving, ſculpture, and painting, can with difficulty be brought to the higheſt perfection in London. An artiſt muſt ſtarve if he waited to give his pieces the laſt finiſhings; he gets as much money by doing well, as if he excelled

led all the world; whereas in France and Italy, he would be paid any price for that which no other could do, and not half what he receives in England for executing what he perform'd only as well as many other artiſts. This is therefore the land at preſent for mediocrity in all things, and excluſion of excellency in any.

In what I have ſaid, there is not one word to be applied to the mechanic inſtruments of uſe; they are finiſhed to a degree of perfection, that is not to be ſeen in any other country: Utility is the reigning idea of all that is done here, and taſte in that of Paris; for which reaſon England has the trade in one kind, and France in the other. And tho' a fine imagination may not be ſo much pleaſed with the Engliſh as the French productions; yet commodity makes a good amends for a ſmall deficiency in figure; and not one in twenty, but is better pleaſed with the poliſh and tinge, than with the deſign of the whole performance. All ſee, but few have any taſte.

In all objects which are offered to the eye, the French have an elegance and taſte which is much beyond that of England, and the Engliſh finiſh the French deſigns better than their own work-

workmen: Ornaments in diamonds are much better diſpoſed at Paris than London, and the ſetting much better in this city than in France.

ONE reſpects the elegant fancy, and the other the elegant hand of the jeweller; and thus in moſt kinds of manufactures, the deſigns of France ſhould be combined with the execution of England, to make a production perfect.

FROM what has been ſaid you may be inclined to believe, that, as taſte and deſign are the effects of genius, and elegant finiſhing the conſequence of patience and a mechanic hand the French ſurpaſs the Engliſh in genius: this is by no means true, I believe; and my next ſhall bring you the reaſons. Adieu,

I am yours affectionately.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the Reverend Father PHILIPPO LAURA, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THE gentlemen of no nation in Europe travel ſo much, as thoſe of this kingdom, into foreign countries. A man that has not ſeen Italy is ſcarce polite company in London: Even Palmyra, hid in deſerts, could not ſave her ruins from the examination of Engliſh travellers.

Two gentlemen have viſited that place, accompanied with another who underſtood architecture and drawing; in conſequence of which, they have given to the public the ruins of that ancient city, in ſeveral well executed prints; and an account of its former and preſent ſtate, as far as can be drawn from hiſtory; and thoſe remains, in the moſt pleaſing manner, written with exquiſite taſte and modeſty. It has been the particular honor of England, to have ſome of their nobility and gentry in private

ſtations, to perform undertakings, worthy the royal encouragement; and its peculiar diſgrace to have had their miniſters negligent in every thing, that may do honor and bring utility to the public.

No nation is at ſo much expence to viſit the works of art, which other kingdoms have produced, as this of England. Italy has received more money from the gentlemen of England, for ſeeing the paintings of the Italian ſchools, than they originally coſt from the hands of the painters; probably more than a hundred times that ſum; to ſay nothing of that vaſt number of paintings, which has been ſold to this and other nations. It is really equal to an eſtate or tax levied on England, and may not unjuſtly be call'd Peter's-pence; it brings vaſt ſums into Rome annually, not to mention that opportunity which our painters have, from copying the works of their predeceſſors, and ſelling them for originals to the connoiſſeurs of all nations.

What ſhall we ſay, after having ſeen with what avidity they viſit all theſe prodigies of genius in arts and ſculpture, at Rome and other cities,

cities, when at their return they grow indifferent about the promoting ſimilar performances in their own nation, and rivaling the artiſts of others.

ENGLAND has not yet produced a good face-painter, much leſs an hiſtorical; of all the productions the preſent performers who have been born in England, there is not one of them will be aſk'd, of whoſe hand it is forty years hence, and perhaps the whole production of one maſter, amaſs'd together, will not ſell at that time for as much money as was given originally for one of them: they have almoſt reduced face-painting to a mechanic art, and make pourtraits as they make pins; one forms the head, another the point. I dare ſay, the time will come, when there will be as many painters to finiſh a whole length figure, as there are now trades to equip a beau: the face-painter, the wig-painter, the cloaths-painter, the linen-painter, the ſtocking-painter, and the ſhoe-painter. For as money is the purſuit, and honor very little called into queſtion, as mens merits are leſs the cauſe of their ſucceſs, than the patronage of ſome great man, and future fame outweigh'd by preſent

ſent money, in all opinions; it is probable from what has already been put in practice by thoſe who have gotten the greateſt fortunes, that this liberal art will be reduced to as mechanical an operation, as making hobnails, that fortunes may be made with the utmoſt expedition.

As things are at preſent managed, it is no encouragement to be excellent in the art of painting; a falſe praiſe effectually carries any man into a run for five or ſix years; they cry he is the beſt painter in England; he has all the people of taſte ſitting to him: what exquiſite drawing, what delicious colouring, what perfect likeneſs! At the expiration of this term, he is no more heard of, than if he had never exiſted; like a ghoſt that haunts a houſe, every one's converſation, and concern, till time cures the belief, and leaves it no longer a ghoſt. This is equally the event, whether he has, or has not merit; the fame, and the run of buſineſs begin and die together: it is for this reaſon, that the painters of England are leſs ſolicitous about ſtudying their profeſſion, than finding a blear-eyed patron, who, with zeal for what he can neither ſee nor underſtand, may impoſe upon others, and ſwell him into high reputation.

An academy of painting eſtabliſhed like that at Paris, where all the pictures of their maſters are ſeen for a whole month, once every year in a public exhibition, would deſtroy theſe falſe methods of getting into reputation: pictures beheld together by thoſe eyes which are not judges of them apart, would have a very different appearance; the artiſt of real merit would not ſtand in need of a puffing patron to get him buſineſs, nor the unſkilful painter have the power of impoſing on the world, by the artifice of an impetuous and ill-judging protector; till this is once accompliſhed it is in vain to expect works of merit, the love of fame will be lulled to ſleep by the opium of money, and the heart at eaſe about the firſt which is ſatisfied with the ſecond.

Let an academy and an exhibition take place, and, for the future, reputation and profit will be the ſame thing, and the ſame path conduct to both poſſeſſions; the temple of fame will not ſtand at the end of an unfrequented bramble-grown path as it does at preſent, and ſome ſquint-eyed patron in attitude of admiration at ſome miſerable production at the end of another,

along which the painters crowd as Don Quivedo has deſcribed his people in the viſion of the loving fools.

If the late prince of Wales had lived, an eſtabliſhment of this kind would probably have taken place in his reign; he was a lover of the imitative arts, and would have encouraged them; the preſent, who is a young prince of great expectation and promiſe, is not yet blown ſufficiently to ſhew all that diverſity and elegancy of tints, which is hoped from the appearance of the flower in the bud.

Whatever may be the event, an academy for painting is certainly worthy a royal inſtitution and protection, if it be but to ſecure the trade of this nation, on which the revenue ſo much depends: an eſtabliſhment of that nature has more influence on the commerce of a people, than perhaps is commonly imagined; and, tho' it never may produce one good painter, will bring many thouſand pounds into the iſland.

How many trades are there whoſe merchandiſe takes its great value from the taſte in which

they are executed; toys of all kinds, and moſt ſorts of furniture for elegant houſes; the form of a gold ſnuff-box ſhall ſell it with an alloy of ten per cent. when ſterling gold ſhall lie unaſked for, becauſe of the aukwardneſs of the make; this the French are ſo ſenſible of, that they allow that alloy to be mixt with all toys in that metal: what beau minds the movement of a watch, if the caſe be elegantly deſigned? the ſame runs thro' the whole of theſe things which depend on fancy, from the pattern of a ſixpenny ribband to the deareſt ſilk, tapeſtry, velvet, and carpets.

An academy therefore, once eſtabliſhed in painting, if it never produced any very excellent painters, would yet create excellent deſigners for the ornamental parts of all kinds of manufactories; the enamelled boxes would vie with Martin's *papier maché*, and the Germans purchaſe their moſt valuable furniture from England, and not from France.

As great numbers from the cheapneſs of the education could apply their children to it, every

lad educated in this way, who was not adequate to great things, would be obliged to turn his hand to ſome lower part of the arts of ſculpture and painting: he who could not equal Michael Angelo, or Raphael, might carve a chimney-piece, and paint a coach with much taſte; thoſe who could not rival Salvator Roſa, Claud Lorain, or Vernet, might yet paint landſcapes on china and enamelled ware, and by export make theſe commodities the univerſal purchaſe of the globe; this will certainly be the conſequence of an academy once eſtabliſhed.

It is alſo a demonſtration, that without theſe helps it is impoſſible to carry the common capacity of men to its greateſt excellence. A genius who has an imagination as vivid and extenſive as can be ſuppoſed, who combines and diſpoſes figures ever ſo elegantly in his head, may yet want the language of a painter, drawing and expreſſion; tho' the firſt is the gift of heaven, the latter is the effect of ſtudy; and notwithſtanding ſome men are born with greater aptitude to deſign than others, as ſome are with more facility of ſpeaking than others, yet it muſt

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be the work of application to draw well, or form a ſtyle, the former of which is much more difficult than the latter; as the laſt may be made every moment's ſtudy in common converſation, the other requires a ſeparate attention and practice: as in learning a language, thoſe who begin late ſcarce ever attain a pure pronunciation; thoſe little differences of ſound and articulation which eſcape the ſpeaker, are clearly diſtinguiſhed by the hearer, and impart an inaccuracy and diſſonance to their pronunciation; in like manner, thoſe who begin to draw late in life are always imperfect in their deſigns, thoſe little inexplicable differences which create the grace and beauty of a figure, are entirely loſt in their works and imperceptible to themſelves; the eye has formed its manner of ſeeing before they began their ſtudies, and, like the organs of ſpeech, or thoſe of hearing, is neither capable of that conformation neceſſary to make or diſtinguiſh thoſe minuteneſſes, which place one production ſo ſuperior to another in taſte and gracefulneſs.

THAT which determines a lad to be bred a a painter, in this country, is his father's ſeeing ſome of his ſcrawls on his books with a pen, or

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on the walls with a charcoal; he is a genius in drawing inſtantly, and this decides his employment; whereas, in fact, this talent is the leaſt of a painter; if he does not ſee nature as ſhe is, and has not a fertile imagination, he never can be made an excellent artiſt; looſe imitations almoſt all can make; he may be a dauber and nothing more, as is manifeſt from the thouſands which have been condemned to this art unſucceſsfully: it has already robbed the public of too many members, which would have been uſeful in other branches of trade, to make miſerable pourtrait-painters, the moſt uſeleſs of all employments which belong to man.

In the neighbouring country of Ireland, the gentlemen have appointed premiums, as incentives to excelling, for thoſe young painters who ſhall produce the moſt approved pieces; this is the beſt ſupply to the want of an academy, where premiums muſt always be inſtituted alſo: this may in time make painters of merit in Dublin; indeed, many of the Engliſh would do well to go thither at preſent, if it were but to recover the love of their country, which yet finds protectors amongſt the commons of Ireland;

Ireland; men who are not aſhamed to prefer it to themſelves. Whether it be fatality, inattention, or ignorance, which reigns over the underſtandings of this people of England, I cannot decide; ſomething however, of that kind ſeems to rule all their actions of a public nature. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO BUONANNI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THERE is nothing which is ſo often objected to the catholics, as that uncharitable tenet of giving all heretics to the devil; believing that none of them can be ſaved, and keeping no faith with them.

THIS indeed is an imputation which favours very little of chriſtianity, and was it carried into practice, and to influence our actions, would be extremely pernicious and truly deteſtable.

I HAVE obſerved, that churches, or ſects, adopt certain articles in their belief, which are diſavowed in their practice; and men become much the ſame in their actions, tho' their tenets, in ſome particulars may differ, if they are held by any at all. The church of England are predeſtinarians by their articles, and preach free-will; the

the diſſenters allow free-will, and preach predeſtination. But let us ſee if the church of England, and diſſenters, are quite free from this imputation of damning thoſe who differ from them. The creed of St. Athanaſius is the creed of the Engliſh church, which, after recounting the articles neceſſary to be believed, ſays, "this "is the catholic faith; which except a man faith-"fully believe, he cannot be ſaved."

"WHAT is there in condemning people to eternal puniſhment in our religion, more criminal than in theirs; it is true, we believe thoſe articles as well as the church of England, they are therefore no condemnation of catholics, but they are of all other religious ſects of chriſtianity, who do not think as they do: thus, they are equally guilty of the crime they impute to us, and unjuſt in the taxation. I am convinced from the behaviour of thoſe catholics who are natives of this kingdom, that their word and honor is as ſeldom violated, as thoſe of a Preſbyterian, or any other ſectary, who condemns this tenet in our church with ſo much violence.

THE Spaniards, the moſt rigid of all catholics, even thoſe men, in commerce have preſerved a punctuality with the Engliſh during the time of war, in returning them the effects in their hands, or tranſacting their affairs, in a manner which will do honor to human kind; yet, the Engliſh are conſidered as heretics by theſe people. Thus, acknowledging this tenet to be one of the Romiſh church, is it not one of the Engliſh alſo? and the influence to ill-will is no greater with us than with them: in fact, as it is contradictory to all the practice of religion, ſo it never influences the mind of any chriſtian. Methinks, this one article is leſs likely to diſpoſe the mind of a human being, to put its dictates in practice, in oppoſition to all others by which we ſuppoſe ourſelves bound to do good, than the natural ſelfiſhneſs of man, let looſe by the opinion that every man has a right to think for himſelf, and act in conſequence of it, which is the ſtanding tenet of the diſſenters.

I FANSY a ſcale might be made of the probity of all ſects, who depart from the eſtabliſhed religion of any nation, gradually leſſening, as they

they are more diſtant from the tenets of the national church; at leaſt, ſomething of that kind appears to me amongſt the ſectaries of England; I know not what Scotland would produce, perhaps, the quite contrary, hypocriſy being the inſeparable companion of that eſtabliſhment.

THE tranſactions of catholics being as honeſt as thoſe of any other church, it appears, that this tenet does not much influence their behaviour in life towards their fellow-creatures, and probably an eye that will look a little farther into things than the ſurface, will find that this affair of excluding people from ſalvation is the inſeparable idea of all the ſectaries, tho' not openly avowed: to what purpoſe, or for what pretence was it, that the Preſbyterians ſeparated from the church of England, but becauſe they conceived that the eſtabliſhed worſhip had ſomething in it which is wrong in its modes and articles of belief, or, which is the ſame thing, that it does not lead to ſalvation? now that which does not lead to ſalvation leads ſomewhere elſe, and thus, they believe that all other chriſtians are not ſaved; indeed they will not avow this openly, but if they do not, they loſe all argument and

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plea for ſeparation; all other conſiderations below that of being in danger of not being ſaved, being infinitely too ſmall for the making new ſects, and dividing the ſentiments of a nation in a matter ſo eſſentially neceſſary, as that of being held by one uniting principle in religion.

PERHAPS this belief of all religions being leſs likely to ſave the ſoul of man, than that which each follows, is inſeparable, and muſt be ſo, from all true believers of what they profeſs. If our own is not beheld in that favourable light, above others, if all religions are alike in our opinion, we ſhall be actuated by none; preference being abſolutely neceſſary in all things, to put the mind of man into action, and make it influenced by any motive: thus this particular belief, and that in religion, ſeem to be ſecretly united for ever together, in the minds of all believers.

A philoſopher then, who is not miſled by the will-of-a-wiſp of words, or dazzled by the aurora borealis of falſe pretenſions, ſees that at the bottom theſe terrible imputations againſt us, by the ſectaries, are really found in their own principles

principles of ſeparation; and in truth, the belief of not being obliged to keep faith with heretics, has influenced the morals of catholics, as little as that of being obliged by nothing, or taking the liberty of thinking for themſelves amongſt the diſſenters; a ſpecies of beings which has never been remarkable for lenity, when they had power, or charitable thoughts for thoſe that differ from them.

FROM much obſervation and in juſtice to the Engliſh church, I own it has a generoſity belonging to it, which has almoſt ruined itſelf by its indulgence to ſectaries; and perhaps a liberality of ſentiment, to be found in no other; greater than the feeble condition of human nature is able to bear and be well governed; indulgence, in extremes, creates diſſatisfaction in all things.

I am your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Reverend Father VINCENZO SPINELLO *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

I have often told you, that this iſland teems with more characters, than are to be found in any nation upon earth, and probably as many as are upon the face of the globe. Every other nation has ſomething which characterizes its people, and makes it viſibly belong to one government; but in England the idea of liberty has reduced the minds of the inhabitants to a ſtate of nature, as near as poſſible: this ariſes from the belief, that in religion as in government, a man is to think and act for himſelf; which has taken off all reſtaint.

INDEED, this is not the avow'd belief of all ranks of people: thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church allow, that the king has a right to decide and determine in matters relating to religion; that he has prerogatives and power, which are truly

his; and yet the miniſtry of late years, who have been all Whigs in politics, and of the eſtabliſh'd religion in matters of faith, if of any, (except one preſbyterian or two, ſlipt into high places) have diminiſh'd the power of the one, and tacitly diſavowed the authority of the other, tho' the government has not been changed by any law whatever.

THIS prevailing opinion in the two moſt eſſential conſiderations of life, has borne down all other minuter influences; *there is no uniform*, eſtabliſh'd behaviour amongſt the people in this kingdom, as you ſee in other places: The very moment an Engliſhman becomes rich enough to think himſelf independent, his firſt pleaſure is, to ſhew that he does not care a ſixpence for any one, by his behaviour and converſation, and lets himſelf looſe to the influence of his ruling whimſy: I ſpeak now of all thoſe, who riſe to great fortunes of their own acquiring: by this means in a London coffee-houſe, a place for ſociety and converſation, you ſee in their faces that theſe men are leſs ſociable creatures, if they are ſilent, than in the inhabitants of Paris, as they walk the ſtreets; a ſtern negative ſpreading itſelf over the countenances of the firſt, and a

look of invitation on thoſe of the latter: if they ſpeak, it is apparently to pleaſe themſelves; the French, tho' with the ſame deſign, yet appearing to pleaſe others.

IT is in this iſle an inviolable maxim, that every man of fortune has a right to ſpend his money as he pleaſes: by this it appears, that neither cuſtom nor government influencing the behaviour of theſe people, there are few that diffuſe their money as they ought, but each man's prevailing whim decides of him in all things.

FROM this principle it naturally happens that one is all horſe-jockey, another fox-hunter; this up to the ears in play, another eternally in taverns and brothels; one rambling from place to place at an expence above his income; this buys pictures, nick-nacks and vértu, till he has not a houſe to put them in, and that purchaſes a ſeat in parliament for ſeven years at the price of half his eſtate (the whole of which was not before that time large enough for his expences) at the expiration of which term, he finds himſelf diſappointed in his expectations, and without an acre of land.

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IF Mr. Locke's opinion of madneſs and idotiſm are juſt, theſe men ought to come under one or other of theſe definitions. Madmen put wrong ideas together, and ſo make wrong propoſitions, but argue and reaſon right from them; but idiots make very few propoſitions, and reaſon ſcarce at all: to which of theſe does the greateſt number belong?

METHINKS this definition of madneſs is extremely imperfect, becauſe almoſt all Engliſhmen, and philoſophers who differ from one ananother, muſt come under that denomination in each other's opinion; thus Deſcartes, who would explain all the motions of the planets by tourbillons, reaſon'd very well from that propoſition, tho' it was falſe, and yet I believe Sir Iſaac Newton never imagined him a madman; and Deſcartes, in like manner, if he had lived at the time of Sir Iſaac, would not have conceived that great man a lunatic, tho' he had never been converted to his doctrines.

I HAVE often imagined, that the inſide of the head of a man in his ſenſes, and that of a

madman, are not ſo totally different, as we are apt to imagine: if another perſon could ſee and write down all the ideas which paſs in our brains in a week; the reſolutions, irreſolutions, hopes, fears, caſtle-buildings, reaſonings, &c.; the perſon himſelf, from whom the picture was drawn, forgetting what had paſſed in his mind, would declare theſe were the reveries of a lunatic.

MADNESS then ſeems to conſiſt in believing all thoſe things to be realities, which the mind images to itſelf, and acting in conſequence of it; the latter part makes the eſſential difference. For, tho' a man ſhould believe himſelf a king, and never behave in conſequence of that imaginary character, he would not be deem'd a madman; in like manner one, whoſe actions were directed with the air and manner of a ſovereign, tho' he did not believe himſelf a king, would yet be conſider'd as a man who had loſt his reaſon. Thus, it is the behaviour which conſtitutes the real idea of madneſs, and the concealment of our thoughts the man of ſenſe: in this nation however, the actions of men muſt be very extraordinary, before the denomination of lunacy can be imputed to them.

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SOME time ſince here was a merchant, whoſe name was Spencer, who lived in a garret, without common neceſſaries; he valued himſelf much on living on a ſhilling a day, and poſſeſſing eight thouſand pounds a year: this proceeding was not looked upon as madneſs in this country, and yet in Italy, it would have moſt inevitably been conſider'd as direct lunacy, and have confined him to an hoſpital. On the other hand an anchorite, who had renounced oppulence and ſplendour to live in a cell, beneath ſome little hillock, upon that which his own hands can produce, croſſing himſelf ten times a minute in devotion on his knees, before a crucifix, would be conſider'd as a ſaint in Italy, and a madman in England; theſe different concluſions ſpring from the ſame cauſe. Riches are ſo much eſteemed in this country, that all kinds of extravagancies in behaviour, which lead to the poſſeſſing that ineſtimable bleſſing, appear with ſome degree of reaſon; and paradiſe is conſider'd in that light amongſt the people of Italy, and totally forgotten in this.

Thus, what looks like madneſs in one nation, to the eyes of a ſtranger, may be received as reaſonable by the inhabitants themſelves: a widow in ſome parts of India thinks it highly reaſonable to run into the funeral pile, which conſumes her huſband; and in England into the arms of a new ſpouſe as ſoon as ſhe can.

After this long diſſertation, give me leave to deſcribe a character of a man, which happened to die whilſt I was on a journey, at a town in Devonſhire. What I ſhall tell you, was related to me by gentlemen of undoubted ſincerity, every one acquieſcing in the truth of it; the whole appear'd ſo ſingular at that time, that I could not avoid taking minutes of his life, which I ſhall herewith ſend you.

His name was Stucley, a gentleman of a very ancient family, and of an eſtate of a thouſand pounds a year; in his youth he was bred to the law, and during this time appeared to have more of that principle in his ſoul which the Newtonians call the *vis inertiæ* in matter, than

is

is to be found in almoſt any man; when put into motion he was extremely apt to continue ſo, and being at reſt he hated moving: by this diſpoſition, when he was prevail'd on by his companions to paſs an evening in gaiety, he never deſired to change that manner of living, and would have perſiſted in it for ever, if he could have prevail'd on them to continue with him, being then as eccentric and as inclined to motion as a comet; in like manner, when he had once become ſedentary by two or three days tarrying at his chambers, he hated the thoughts of being put into action again, and was always difficultly brought abroad, like a heavy ſtone, which has lain ſome time in one place on the ground, and formed itſelf a bed, out of which it is not eaſily removed.

When he left London, he retired into the country, filled with the project of perfecting the perpetual motion; this naturally kept him much at home in purſuit of this ſtudy: and as no one in the town had reſolution enough to reaſon with him on the affair, or was of import enough to make him change his deſign; that habit of perſiſting in one way kept him at home entirely.

During

During the courſe of more than thirty years, he never came abroad but once, which was, when he was obliged to take the oath of allegiance to king George the firſt; this was the only time he changed his ſhirt, garments, or ſhaved himſelf, for the whole time of his retirement: he was a very little man, and at once the moſt naſty and cleanlieſt perſon alive; waſhing his hands twenty times a day, and neglecting every other part: during this confinement, he never had his bed made. After he had given over all hopes of ſucceſs in the perpetual motion, he took pleaſure in obſerving the works and policy of ants, and ſtock'd the whole town ſo plentifully with that inſect, that the fruits in the gardens were devour'd by them.

During the reign of the immortal queen Anne, whenever the duke of Marlborough opened the trenches againſt any city in Flanders, he broke ground at the extremity of a floor in his houſe, made with lime and ſand, according to the cuſtom of that country, and made his approaches regularly with his pick-axe, gaining work after work, chalk'd out on the ground,

according

according to the intelligence in the gazette, he took the town in the middle of the floor at Bideford, the ſame day his grace was maſter of it in Flanders: thus every city coſt him a new floor.

DURING the time of his ſtaying within doors, he never ſat on a chair, and when he choſe to warm himſelf, he had made a pit before the fire, into which he leapt, and thus ſat on the floor.

HE ſuffer'd no one to ſee him, but the heir of his eſtate, his brother and ſiſter; the firſt never but when he ſent for him, and that very rarely; the others ſometimes once a year, and ſometimes ſeldomer, when he was chearful, talkative, and a lover of the tittle-tattle of the town.

HIS family conſiſted of two ſervant maids, one of which ſlept in the houſe, the other not: notwithſtanding this ſingularity and apparent avarice he was by no means a lover of money; for, during this whole time, he had never received nor aſked for any rent from many of his tenants, and thoſe who brought him money, he would

often

often keep at an inn more than a week, pay all their expences, and ſend them back again without receiving a ſhilling.

He lived well in his houſe, and frequently gave to the poor; always eat from large joints of meat, and never ſaw any thing twice at his table; and at Chriſtmas he divided a certain ſum of money amongſt the neceſſitous of the town.

He ſeem'd to be afraid of two things only; one, being kill'd for his riches; the other, being infected with a diſeaſe; for which reaſon he would ſend his maid ſometimes to borrow a half crown from his neighbours, to hint he was poor; and always received the money which was paid him, in a baſon of water, to prevent taking infection from thoſe who paid him.

He never kept his money under lock and key, but piled it up on the ſhelves, before the plates in his kitchin. In his chamber, into which no ſervant had entered during the time of his tarrying at home, he had two thouſand guineas on the top of a low cheſt of drawers, cover'd with duſt, and five hundred lying on the floor, where it lay five and twenty years; this laſt ſum a child had

had thrown down which he was fond of playing with, by overſetting a table that ſtood upon one foot; the table continued in the ſame ſituation alſo: thro' this money he had made two paths, by kicking the pieces on one ſide, one of which led from the door to the window, the other from the window to the bed.

When he quitted the Temple in London, he left an old portmanteau over the portal of the antichamber, where it had continued many years, during which time the chambers had paſſed thro' ſeveral hands; when at laſt, the gentleman who poſſeſſed them ordering his ſervant to pull it down, it broke by being rotten, and out fell four or five hundred pieces of gold, which were found to belong to him from the incloſed papers; this he had never examined after: It is generally ſuppoſed alſo, that he had put ſome thouſands of pounds in the hands of a banker, or lent it to ſome tradeſman in London, without taking any memorandum of it from the perſon; all which is loſt to his heirs, as he would never ſay to whom he lent it, thro' fear perhaps leſt he ſhould hear it was loſt, which ſome minds can bear to ſuſpect tho' not to to know poſitively: after more

more than thirty years living a recluſe, he was at laſt found dead in his bed covered with lice. And thus ended the life of this whimſical being. The gentleman who gave me this account was a man of excellent underſtanding, and who accompanied him to the town-hall when he went to take the oath of allegiance; he aſſured me, that in all the queſtions he could propoſe on every ſubject he could think on, he did not ſhew the leaſt tincture of madneſs; he rallied himſelf on the perpetual motion, laughed at the folly of confining himſelf in-doors, and ſaid he believed he ſhould now come abroad again like other men; he was always eſteemed a perſon of good underſtanding before his ſhutting himſelf up: at the time of his death he was building a houſe, the walls of which were ſeven foot thick, probably his fears of being murdered increaſing with his age (I think he was more than ſeventy) induced him to build this caſtle-like dwelling to defend him from the attacks of thieves. This gentleman then, if he was lunatic, which none of his friends ever ſuppoſed him, ſeems to be ſo in the manner I have before mentioned, by putting all the reveries and whimſies of the human brain into action,

and

and being unchecked by all external influence; a man of this ſtamp, with a turn to devotion, would have been cannonized as a ſaint in Italy.

THUS, ſir, I have ſent you a very ſingular, and very true pourtrait, which I hope you will conſider as natural philoſophers do the extraordinary productions of human nature, where the viſcera are tranſpoſed, or any deviation from the common way of her productions: for tho' I look upon one reſearch or diſcovery of the univerſal principles of nature, beyond a thouſand of its irregular productions; yet, I hope in complaiſance to the reigning taſte in this kingdom, you will receive this with as much diſtinction as a ſix-legged rabbit, a two-headed lamb, or a double-bodied chicken, would be, by what is at preſent called a Philoſopher in England. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO PAMPTA *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IS it a paradox to ſay, that folly and philoſophy in many caſes are very near a-kin; and that what is deſpiſed as ſuperſtition and weakneſs in one nation, may be eſteemed as reaſonable and praiſe-worthy in another.

FASHION reigns in all the occupations of human nature, in philoſophy, and religion, as well as in dreſs and diverſions; tilts and tournaments are no more in England, horſe-races and fox-hunting ſupply that place: the mind muſt be engaged, tho' we change the purſuit, and tho' the objects of the year 1500 become totally neglected and deſpiſed, yet thoſe in faſhion in 1750, have neither more truth, nor more good ſenſe belonging to them, than the former; *alius et idem naſcitur* is equally applicable to ſuns, men, and faſhions.

WHEN religion was the reigning mode, relicks of ſaints were very acceptable to every one;

a nail

a nail of the true croſs, a finger of St. Peter, a bone of St. Benedict, were eſteemed worthy the regard of every one, however exalted in life and riches, and preſerved in ſhrines of gold and ſilver. Chriſtians conceived that thoſe who had been illuſtrious in piety, or propagating their faith, deſerved eſteem and reverence for the advantages they had bequeathed to mankind, and the examples which they had ſet before them.

IN this nation, that manner of thinking is at at an end, becauſe religion is no longer in faſhion."

LET us however, ſee whether the folly is cured by the reformation, or whether the ſame humour is not broke out in ſome other ſhape. Are not the preſent Antiquarians of England as ridiculous to the full, as the chriſtians of our country who pay great eſteem to the relicks of ſaints? always remembering, that the meaneſt capacities are thoſe which are ſubject to this attention in Italy, and theſe which call themſelves the higheſt in this kingdom to the other.

An Italian peaſant believes, that the effluvia from the ſhrine of St. Anthony can cure him of a diſeaſe; he hangs up a waxen leg as a votive offering of gratitude for a limb preſerved; and by this means feels the higheſt ſenſation of joy, which a human creature is capable of conceiving; thus, this folly is not without its pleaſure attending it.

A philoſopher believes he poſſeſſes the very knife that diſſected the heartleſs ox, at the ſacrifice which Cæſar made before his being aſſaſſinated; this is a curioſity not to be eſteemed ſufficiently, it becomes the envy of every antiquarian, the eternal cauſe of ſighing the moſt rare of all the rare things upon earth.

An Italian catholic has the chalice which St. Jerom uſed in the communion of the Euchariſt, and values it amazingly; he would rather part with any thing, than that which was employed by the hands of that pious man.

Which is the moſt abſurd credulity? He who imagines himſelf poſſeſſed of what has no proof belonging to it, or, he who believes that

this chalice will defend him from diſeaſe and injury?

THE objects of this faith are different indeed, but the ridicule in each is equally ſtriking; is it not to the full as unworthy the dignity of that *great reaſoner*, man, to give credit to a knife's being preſerved ſince the time of that ſacrifice, that it has fallen into his hands, and then value it for that reaſon? as it is to believe the chalice of St. Jerom has the power of preſerving human nature from evil?

INDEED, the chriſtian ſacrifice is much out of faſhion, and the pagan highly conſidered amongſt antiquarians; one diſgraced by the name ſuperſtition, the other exalted by that of philoſophy, and vértu; Cæſar adored as a genius and general, and Chriſt reduced to a carpenter's ſon.

YET to every eye uninfluenced by prejudice, what compariſon between the two, even conſidered as human beings? One brought death on his countrymen, and ſlavery on his native land; the latter died to ſave mankind, and left behind him a doctrine which contains all that is ne-

ceſſary for the felicity of man; it abſolutely recalled mankind from that depreciating ſtate of deifying the worſt of mortals, and replaced it in the regions of virtue; yet, the commentaries of Cæſar, which convey to us devaſtation and deſtruction, ſhall be read with delight; whilſt the evangeliſts who preach peace, purity of heart, and good-will towards all men, are reckoned a matter not worth the notice of a philoſopher, unleſs, peradventure, he has ſome deſign to attempt proving that the accounts they contain are not true.

As an impartial and philoſophic examiner, which is the moſt reaſonable creature? he who ſeeks comfort from the ſhrine of St. Francis; or he who delighteth his ſoul with poſſeſſing Cleopatra's patch-box, or the earthen ſaucepan in which Diogenes ſtewed his cabbage? The firſt rejoices in the poſſeſſion, becauſe he imagines there is ſome hidden virtue belonging to it; the latter becauſe it belonged to ſome ſingular perſon, and a thing which no man elſe has; which, notwithſtanding that thought, is the moſt trivial upon the face of the earth, all ſingular things being ſo in nature, becauſe the moſt uſeleſs; the common air, common earth, common wa-

ter, common fire, as they are the moſt univerſal, are alſo the moſt excellent of all things; theſe are objects too great for the enquiry of the preſent philoſophers, as purſuits worthy of eſteem are for the antiquarians.

THE man who would explain to us what cuſtoms made ancient nations happy, and ſhew us why they were ſo in conſequence of it; who would inveſtigate the ſources of good government, and adopt the plan which will conduce moſt effectually to happineſs; develope the faculties of man aſſign objects proper to each, and convince us that ancients and moderns are by nature inferior to the pride of the ſtoic, and juſtly analyzing the whole ſoul, ſhew its component parts as they are, would be received with much leſs glee amongſt the antiquarians, than he who ſhould read a long diſſertation upon the ſhape of the Clepſydra, the Triclinia, and candleſticks of the ancient Romans; the diſcoverer of the laſt would be more conſidered as a man of genius, than he who invented the machine to draw water from the loweſt mines by the powers of ſteem, or the ventilator which brings a public benefit to our ſpecies:

ſuch is the preſent value of frivolous and trifling purſuits, and the neglect of uſeful and ingenious enquiries in London.

If we penetrate to the heart of the devotee and the antiquarian, the adorer of relicks, and the adorer of vértu; we ſhall find, that the whole value of the lamp which lighted St. Auguſtin to his devotions in his cell, and that which illumined the cave of Demoſthenes in his ſtudies, ariſe from an over-pious belief that men of exemplary virtue communicate ſomething of that nature to all they poſſeſs, and an over-weaning credulity that men of genius impart to all they uſe, a ſhare of their intellectual poſſeſſions: this can only be the cauſe of their admiration, and is equally ridiculous in the devotee and antiquarian; the objects, without this previous knowledge to whom they belonged, imparting nothing which creates attention or ſurprize. The lanthorn with which Diogenes ſearched for an honeſt man at mid-day in the ſtreets of Athens, being in no other ſenſe a greater curioſity, than that of Tom Davis a watchman, which lights him in his rounds, in London paſt twelve at midnight.

Thus

THUS then, when I ſee the people of pretended wiſdom gaping with aſtoniſhment, and graſping with deſire, the knives, door-hinges, baſons and utenſils dug from Herculaneum, becauſe they are ancient; I cannot avoid laughing at the attention which theſe philoſophers pay thoſe trifles, and rank them with the devout adorers of the relicks of St. Anthony, St. Benedict, and St. Francis.

WHOEVER has much obſerved human nature, muſt know it too well to behold the former or the latter with much ſurprize; it is the condition of feeble man to ſearch relief from ſuch objects, and ſelect ſomething for every part of the ſoul and propenſity in human nature.

YET I own, I am much inclined to be merry, when I ſee a ſet of men, who would be extremely diſpleaſed to be counted otherwiſe than men of deep ſcience, rejoicing in the poſſeſſion of a ſcarce medal, a ſacrificing patera, or lamp of antiquity, conceiving knowledge annexed to ſuch purſuits, and honor in the keeping them; and yet deſpiſing the devotee who paſſes his breviary over St. Be-

nedict's ſhrine to collect its efficacious effluvia, or paying homage to the tooth of an apoſtle; is it more ridiculous to offer devotion to one, than to believe there is ſcience in the other? would not Democritus laugh at the man, who made the ſuperb diſtinction of philoſophy and folly between theſe propenſities; and Heraclitus weep, that men could purſue ſuch objects, with a belief of real knowledge in one, and efficacious influence in the other?

If both are ridiculous, yet methinks, they are not equally ſo: the devotee, purſuing the diſpoſitions implanted in man, is only weak like man; the other, aſſuming the philoſopher, and man of reſearch, in purſuits equally abſurd, is equally weak, and yet ten times more the object of ridicule, becauſe he ſtigmatizes that with the appellation of folly in others, which he dignifies with philoſophy in himſelf, and cannot diſcover that he and they differ in nothing but in words, devotion and vertu, the love of religion and the love of antiquity; the paſſion is the ſame, and the objects equally meritorious, only faſhion has given one the air of reaſon and truth, and religion out of faſhion,

the

the air of folly and falſhood, to the other. Alas! we are men alike thro' all, and the antiquarian of England as credulous, and as little philoſophic, as the devotee of Rome: the impartial eye and ſagacious head diſcover what ſurfaces conceal; that novelty, rarity, and faſhion, delight and delude; yet the ocean of intellect is all the ſame, and contains the ſame materials, below; the priſm of the human underſtanding divides the flood of light into its original compounding colours, the green, blue, or violet, may, in their turns be the reigning colour in vogue; and the true philoſopher perceives that an equal truth belongs to each, and their union conſtitutes that which gives life and viſibility to all. I am,

Your moſt obedient,
and moſt humble ſervant.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Reverend Father BATISTA GUARINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT has been the obſervation of ſome travellers, that the refined policy of the Venetians has deſignedly created a contempt of their clergy, and a kind of plenary indulgence in the affairs of gallantry; in conſequence of which the nuns frequently receive their lovers in their convents, and after having vow'd an eternal adieu to the delights of this world, paſs their hours in the ſweets of carnal love, and mere mortality.

I am not politician enough to decide, whether this be right according to the maxims of their government; nor do I know, that encouragement to vice, and the diminiſhing the power of reſtraining it by depreciating the eſteem of the clergy, neceſſarily enter into the idea of an ariſtocracy. It ſeems to me however, that the miniſters of this kingdom may poſſibly conceive it in that light, and their views be calculated to introduce the ſame kind of government hereafter in this iſland, which

reigns

reigns in Venice at preſent; they may leſſen the authority of the crown to that of the Doge, and buying the votes of that rabble of little boroughs in the kingdom, ſecure to themſelves hereafter thoſe who may unite to plunder and undo, then treat their maſter with contempt, and keep their own power ſuperior: an underſtanding that would doubt this, after their intending to paſs a law againſt clandeſtine marriage, in the manner it is deſigned to be enacted, muſt have a great inclination to ſcepticiſm indeed.

IT has been already ſaid, that the Venetians, by tolerating the criminal intercourſe of the ſexes, and ſhewing no favourable atttention to the clergy, muſt have imagined, that ſuch behaviour is neceſſary to the ſupporting an ariſtocratic government, which is with them very deſpotic and tyrannic.

YOUTH muſt be indulged in venereal delights, the propenſity which is moſt natural to it, to allure their attentions from the ſtudy of politics, and enervate their reſolutions by that indulgence; and the clergy render'd almoſt contemptible, leſt that power, which divines have over the minds of men, ſhould create oppoſition

to

to the civil authority, and give the ſenators diſturbance by preaching patriotiſm and virtue.

IF theſe are the reaſons of the Venetian nobility, the miniſterial men of this iſland, may probably have adopted the ſame ſentiments for the ſame intent; at leaſt there has lately been thoughts of paſſing a law in this nation, which may bid fair to have no better tendency.

IT is ſaid that it will be enacted, that no marriage ſhall be valid without conſent of guardians or parents, where either perſon is leſs than twenty-one years old.

THE penal parts to reſt only on the clergyman, who performs the office; the male or female, who is above age, to incur no penalty; and the young lady who ſhall be ſeduced, to have no reſtitution for her loſt reputation and virtue.

THE more one conſiders the nature of this act, the more it appears impoſſible that any thing can be more effectually plann'd, to the effectuating the deſign of introducing an ariſtocratic or oligarchic power; it contains every thing neceſſary, combined in one law, for that intent:

tent: if the abettors of it will ſtill avow that their deſign had nothing of that kind conceal'd in it, how will they clear themſelves from the imputation of the moſt ſhort-ſighted politicians, that ever pretended to give laws to a nation, will they, after ſo manifeſt a miſtake, perſiſt to preſide in affairs of ſtate and public welfare?

WHENEVER an order of men, equally criminal with another who has no greater right to immunites by law or privilege, is exempted from the punition, to which the former is ſubjected by the legiſlature, may it not be ſaid, that it is either deſigned to ſhew the contempt which the miniſters have entertained for one above the other, or ſome private miniſter view exempts the latter, for reaſons peculiar to themſelves, and not tending to public good?

WHAT pretext can a man make uſe of, to amuſe an inquiſitive eye, and blind a juſt judge, who is about to ſubject the clergyman to penal laws for crimes, in every commiſſion of which there muſt be always ſome one more criminal than him whom this law makes only culpable.

THIS

THIS is what is ſaid to be the deſign; for example, Sir, if a young gentleman of age ſhall, when this law is paſt, prevail on a young lady, who loves him, to be married contrary to law, by ſubduing the virtue of a clergyman in neceſſity, by a ſum of money immenſe in his eyes, to perform the matrimonial rite, and conquer the chaſte reſolutions of the virgin, by vows of eternal truth, and arguments which love will eaſily believe, and art eaſily ſuggeſt, that marriage is a ſacred rite, over which no earthly potentates have the leaſt authority; that therefore it is impious to pretend to it; yet, ſuch is to be the lenity of this law, that this ſeducer is not to be puniſhed.

WHO that has known the leaſt of human hearts, can imagine, that the fairer ſex in love will liſten to this law, and act in conſequence of it.

YET, a tranſaction of this kind, it is ſaid, is to condemn the clergyman a felon to the plantations, and leave, amazing to human belief! the perſon who ſeduced the young lady and the clergyman, in full liberty to repeat the ſame crime

crime ten thouſand times, if he can find opportunities.

CAN therefore any law be deviſed, which can ſo effectually bring the clergy into diſgrace, as being ſubjected to partial acts of parliament, and eraſe that lawful authority which they ſhould have in all ſtates, over the minds of men committed to their care: can the ſenſe of Britons be ſo depraved to let it be paſt in England.

AT the ſame time, can there be any incitement to libidinous attempts, ſo ſtrong, as thus reducing the young, innocent, and virtuous, to ruin by a law, which the enamour'd heart can never conceive to be right, in contradiſtinction to that which has always been deem'd ſacred and inviolable till now, unleſs ſome immoral actions have given cauſe for a divorce.

INDEED, if this law ſhould paſs, there remains but one greater incentive to luſt and debauchery, which is giving premiums to him who ſhall ruin moſt virgins; and this probably will take place in this kingdom, ſooner than an encouragement to virtue, arts, or ſciences:

For

For inſtance, an authentic liſt of a certain number of deflower'd virgins of good families, may give to a young nobleman an enſigncy, lieutenancy, or captain's commiſſion in the guards, and in like manner, commiſſions in the common marching regiments, to others of the gentry, according to their merits.

OTHER young men of leſs honourable parentage, ſons of corrupted mayors, and perjured returning officers, may be provided for in the cuſtoms, exciſe, and other places, according to their deſerts in this way; and laſtly, the common people may be remunerated by giving ſo much a maidenhead, to be paid by the church-wardens of pariſhes, as they do already for a badger, or a fox's head: this would complete the ſcheme. Pray tell me, if the promoters of this law can have virtue in view, and the promotion of public utility, whence does it ariſe, that when the perſon of age ſhall have contracted this marriage, and offended this law, he is not to be puniſh'd with death as in France?

THIS precaution it is foreſeen, may prevent this artifice of ruining virgins by a falſe marriage,

riage, the perſon who would then be ſtrengthen'd in his powers of ſeduction, will be limited by the fear of puniſhment, and conſequently the young men reſtrain'd from gallantry, and debauch, both of which muſt ever be indulged in a nation, that is to be undone: and then, as few of theſe offences in marriage, may be committed under ſo obſtinate a check, the clergy could not be loaded with infamy: Thus two great reaſons of enacting this law may be deſtroy'd by enacting this clauſe.

If ſeducing young girls to their ruin, and their proving pregnant from this interview, is to be obligatory on the man to marry them, as it is in Holland; then will not the virtuous young gentlemen of this iſland receive a moſt unmerciful oppoſition to their humane diſpoſitions of ruining maids, and the deſign of the law be entirely fruſtrated?

Does it not evidently appear then, that this law, if it is paſt, will tend to leſſen the moral influence and power of the clergy, and open new roads to gallantry, and debauching virgins; and is not this following the Venetians in their favourite maxims of ariſtocratic government?

THIS however is not the whole, which ſeems intended by this law; minors being withheld from diſpoſing of themſelves, till of age, are actually in the hands of their parents or guardians till that hour; during which time, by coaxing, by threats, by promiſes, by ſale, and ten thouſand other methods, they may eaſily engage them to wed the perſons they pleaſe to chuſe for them; avarice or pride, the ruling paſſions of old age in this land, will oblige parents to wed their children to every vice, diſeaſe and deformity, to every thing diſagreeable in ſoul and body, to obtain more riches, or procure titles.

THUS then, in future times, the great families uniting with the rich, will not the borough towns, which are already thoroughly corrupted, chuſe the wealthieſt candidates, or thoſe who can give moſt money for them? by this means will the repreſentatives in p——— be any longer thoſe of the people? will not the nobility and commoners, who are ſufficiently wealthy to place whom they pleaſe in that great charge, rule their behaviour, with the eaſe of a machine wound up to go as they chuſe, and ſet to ſtrike

the hours right or wrong, at their direction? Hence may it not hereafter follow, that the power of money, in the poſſeſſion of a few, ſhall influence all, and oppoſe that of the crown, by purchaſing a p——t which may alike infringe the regal authority, and peoples liberties, in preference of their own power; a cry of hounds ſo nicely taught, that they will quit the prey in full chace, if the miniſterial huntſman throws the pole before them; or hunt down a lamb with as much rage as a fox, if halloo'd by him to the purſuit.

THIS nothing can ſo ſoon effectuate as this law, which if it paſs muſt inevitably produce a union of riches and honors, and at no very diſtant period prove the deſtruction of the crown's legal authority, and the peoples juſt liberties, and generate an ariſtocracy or oligarchy to be the directing power of this nation.

THEN tell me, do not you plainly perceive, this ſeems to be done with intent ſooner or later to render the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church open to contempt and infamy, from which the diſſenting teachers are exempted by this very act, theſe having no power of performing the nuptial rite?

As the Engliſh clergy, excepting a few abandoned men, have ever been the friends of the true government, in ſupporting the king's rights, and peoples privileges, it becomes abſolutely neceſſary to render theſe men contemptible in the eyes of all, before their doctrines can be totally diſregarded; which this law in time will moſt effectually produce. Thus the clergy may be rendered deſpiſed, and infamous, the virgins of moſt beauty and beſt diſpoſitions deſtined to the arms of violators, and ſeducers; the legiſlative power given into the hands of riches, the regal authority, the peoples liberties and virtues annihilated, by one law againſt clandeſtine marriage.

Is it not evident then, that the Preſbyterian plan of government which was in vain attempted by that infamous race of men, in the reign of Charles the firſt, by arts, arms, and aſſaſſination, is at preſent very near being effected in the reign of George the ſecond, and the king and people loſing thoſe prerogatives and liberties which have coſt them ſo much blood and treaſure, ſo often and ſo well defended by the arms and eloquence

of their anceſtors, by the artifice of miniſterial men, diſguiſed in the ſhape of a law?

IN this way will the Engliſh conſtitution one day expire, as it appears to my eyes, who behold objects with leſs partiality, than thoſe natives who either oppoſe or defend the miniſterial power. I am,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the Reverend Father BATISTA GUIANI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IS it not true, that individuals may be very defective in one ſenſe, and very perfect in another? the eye may ſcarce have accuracy enough to diſtinguiſh colours at a little diſtance, and yet the ear may be ſo perfect as to diſcover the ſucceeding notes in the dying vibration of one ſtring, or expiring ſound of one bell; whilſt another perſon ſhall diſcover the leaſt deviation from true drawing, or varying ſhade of the ſame colour, and not diſtinguiſh one air or tune from another: the ſame is equally true in the other ſenſes of ſmelling, touching, and hearing.

THIS obſervation has led me to imagine, that the ſame degrees of excellence which are to be found in the ſenſes of individuals, may characteriſe a whole nation in this reſpect.

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IN paſſing thro' Paris to this city, I could not avoid being greatly aſtoniſhed at the pleaſure with which the audience ſeemed to be delighted, with the ſingers on their ſtage; for that reaſon which above all others is the moſt diſguſting in muſic, the being eternally out of tune.

NOT a ſinger in the opera ever performs an air without that error, and yet, the whole audience does not appear the leaſt ſenſible of it: an Italian porter would have raved at ſuch ſounds, and left the theatre inſtantly, half mad, unleſs the ſinger had quitted the ſtage.

THIS naturally made me ſuggeſt, that this nation in general is defective in hearing; the organs of that ſenſe, in a French native, are not made with ſufficient delicacy, to diſtinguiſh between being in tune, and not in tune; whereas, thoſe of an Italian peaſant are extremely accurate in this ſenſe.

NOTWITHSTANDING this, the deficiency which is ſo notorious in this part of the organi-

zation of a Frenchman, is amply atoned for, by the great perfection of the ſenſe of ſeeing.

In all attitudes of the human figure, whether in dancing, walking, or any other kind of polite action, nothing is more juſt, graceful, and becoming, than what is to be found in France, not only in the ſuperior ranks, but even the lower have a great degree of that becoming action.

The eyes of this people are ſo extremely ſubtle and diſtinguiſhing, that the ſmalleſt improper action in a player, the leaſt diſtorted or ungraceful motion in a dancer's limbs is immediately perceived; the eye of that perſon, whoſe ear cannot diſtinguiſh between an inſtrument in tune and not, diſcerns the leaſt ungraceful movement of the body, and receives much pain from it.

Hence it follows, that the muſicians of Paris are very often deficient in tuning their inſtruments, and their dancers the moſt graceful and juſt in all the attitudes of bodily motion.

This ſuperior accuracy of ſenſe in the eye does not terminate in the dancer, it goes on in the

the painter and ſtatuary, in the drawings, decorations and ornaments of all kinds of toys and furniture; and I believe, it is no violation of truth, to ſay, that the French academy of painting and ſculpture furniſhes the beſt maſters of theſe kinds in Europe at preſent: this you muſt confeſs is no ſmall conceſſion from the lips of an Italian, where theſe arts have flouriſhed and reigned in all the zenith of perfection.

THE Engliſh, with whom I have long reſided, reſemble our natives in the delicacy of hearing, more than either the Italians or French in that of eye-ſight.

THEIR very ballad-ſingers in the ſtreets are in tune, and are really for that reaſon alone, without conſidering the taſte of their common airs, a more agreeable entertainment, than all the voices of the French opera.

THE ear of a Briton has a great degree of perfection, ſenſibility, and taſte of the powers of muſic; it diſtinguiſhes inſtantly between the pleaſures which are communicated by inſtruments

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in tune, and thoſe which are not; and tho' many of the hearers know not the reaſon, yet, their diſpleaſure is viſible in their faces, whenever that accident happens in a piece of muſic, which has before given them delight.

HOWEVER excellent this ſenſe of hearing may be in the natives of this iſland, even in the deſcendants of the original inhabitants, as I remarked in my journey into Wales; it is manifeſt that the accuracy of the viſual diſcernment is not to be compared with that of the French; neither men or women preſent themſelves with that grace, which is ſpread over all the behaviour of both ſexes in Paris; they neither dance or move with ſuch eaſe and dignity; one degenerates into flippant, and the other ſwells into burleſque; for this reaſon this iſland has not bred fine dancers, either among men or women.

THAT excellence depends on the perfection of the eye-ſight, and is totally directed by that ſenſe; it may be conceived that motions in dancing, as they are accommodated to muſic, the dancer ought to be a judge of that alſo, and have a nice

a nice ear; this indeed, is true, but then it depends on the knowing the time of the compoſition, and not diſcerning the inſtrument's being in tune; a muſician may be a moſt excellent timiſt, and the hearer a good judge of that part, tho' the firſt plays the whole air out of tune, and the dancer knows nothing of the difference.

To this defect of viſual powers may it not be aſſigned, that England has not yet produced a good painter, no one amongſt them having been remarkable (I mean a native) for either drawing or colouring well?

Even the ſole man of great invention amongſt the painters, has been ſomewhat deficient in drawing and colouring: tho' his fanſy has been luxuriant and juſt, yet the other parts, which depend on the perfection of the ſenſe of ſeeing, have been unequal to that of the imagination.

These natural and original defects may probably prevent the Engliſh from ever having excellent painters amongſt the natives, and the French from producing exquiſite muſicians.

To

To what other cauſe can it be aſcribed, that tho' the ſame mental powers have ſhewn themſelves in their writings of fanſy, which are neceſſary to make excellent painters and muſicians, that thoſe artiſts are yet unproduced amongſt the natives of this iſle and that kingdom? I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Reverend Father CURTIO MARINELLI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is not in theſe maxims alone which I laſt ſent you, that the miniſterial part of this kingdom imitates the Venetian policy; beſides the toleration, not to ſay the encouragement given to gallantry, and contemning the clergy, there is yet one other ſcandal belonging to that ſtate, which is publicly encouraged in this.

THIS is the countenancing that poiſonous and pernicious race of informers, a ſet of men juſtly deteſted by all preceding nations; beings which are engendered from the rottenneſs of a peoples morals, and a miniſter's nefarious ſchemes, like monſters in the mud of Nilus, or ſnakes in dung and putrefaction.

INDEED, every one is too ſenſible that ſuch hyæna-beings have ever exiſted, and been employed in all kingdoms, particularly towards their decline; but that they ſhould be publicly known,

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and then openly and honourably remunerated, is an inſtance unexemplified in any virtuous nation ancient or modern.

INDEED, in London there are no heads of wood as at Venice, into which informations may be conveyed, excepting thoſe of the adminiſtration, and theſe are of that wood out of which a ſtatuary would be egregiouſly puzzled to make a Mercury.

THERE are ſome inſtances, when information becomes a virtue; the ſlave that overheard the deſigns of the ſons of the elder Brutus, to ſubvert the government and reſtore the Tarquins to Rome; the diſcoverers of the Catalinian conſpiracy; each deſerved public thanks, and honourable remuneration: the importance of the diſcovery eraſed the blackneſs of the heart, which generally attends ſuch degenerate beings; a virtuous man even might have done this.

BUT in trivial affairs, ſuch as the inadvertent and unbecoming expreſſions of three intoxicated boys, where no danger could attend the indiſ-

indiſcretion, in a place where they had not the leaſt intereſt, which the informer muſt perfectly know, is it not amazing he ſhould find honourable encouragement for ſuch baſeneſs?

ADDED to this, the very ſituation he was in, the meanneſs of his birth, the diſtreſs of his circumſtances, his known character and the public contempt for it, ſhould have leſſened the weight of his information, tho' it had excuſed in ſome meaſure his daring to do it.

YET, ſuch is the reception he has met with at the M———r's hands, that it is poſitively aſſerted, he is to receive ſome conſiderable dignity in the church for his information; ſo honourable is the name and occupation of an informer become in this iſland, that henceforth it probably will advance the baſeſt born to the rank of poſſeſſing what is worthy of the acceptation of nobility; it is even rumoured, that a noble earl's ſon, and this moſt pernicious of all beings to ſociety, are to receive the ſame honors on the ſame day.

THIS I cannot believe to be true: will any miniſter be ſo weak and unmannerly, to throw ſo flagrant a contempt on the noble perſon who is deſtined to this honor, to place on the ſame rank with him a proſtituted informer? Can it be conceived that any deſcendant of a noble family can bear ſuch an inſult on that reſpect he was born to, and is due to him; or, that thoſe who have already received that dignity will ſit on the ſame ſeat with infamy, and ſuffer it to tarniſh the honors of their office, by the peſtilential effluvia which eſcape from it.

IS it to be imagined, that a M———r will diſgrace the character of a divine, and efface the influence which a teacher and inſtructor of morality and religion ought to have over the minds of men, by thus dignifying eccleſiaſtically the moſt infamous of all characters? will he bring a diſgrace on the religion of Chriſt, by exalting the Iſcariot of his apoſtles, and annihilate the effects of its doctrines, by rewarding the actions of thoſe men which it deteſts.

IF this ſhould be done, henceforth will the Britons pretend, that the church in England is

no

no refuge for thoſe who deſerve ignominious puniſhment, and condemning the Italians, aſſert that it offers no ſanctuary for villains.

YET, believe me, ſir, there are thoſe who are poſitive in aſſerting that this creature will be publicly honoured, and aſſign this reaſon for it:

NOTHING, ſay they, is ſo much to be dreaded by the adminiſtration, as a total extirpation of Jacobitiſm; if there remain no ſymptoms of attachment to the Stuart family, in England, what will the Whigs have to offer to their maſter, when he would purſue what ſeems right to him, and fatal to themſelves? or, how amuſe the people, when they are inclined to tranſact ſomething pernicious to the peoples welfare, with dangerous deſigns from the chevalier de St. George at Rome, whoſe intereſt the laſt rebellion has proved not to be worth ſix-pence in England.

A diſcovery of boys ſpeaking treaſon, is a very acceptable ſervice to thoſe who are determined to dupe the ———, and deceive the people; it is inſtantly heightened into ſomething of the moſt criminal nature, ſpreading like a peſtilence, and ſounded in the royal ear as if all

England (except thoſe who have the honor to approach his perſon) were his enemies and in arms againſt him; than which, nothing is leſs true.

A rebellious ſong from a drunken peaſant is the delight of a Whig; and he that informs ſhall find his reward.

SHOULD the waves of Jacobitiſm be entirely huſhed, and no little murmuring remain upon the ſhore, the eyes of all England would be turned on the miniſtry; the people would ſoon be convinced how neceſſary it is to change the adminiſtration, and the —— himſelf cured of the groundleſs fear of loſing his —— by the contrivances of Jacobites (of which there is no danger) perceive, that his juſt prerogative and authority were ſecretly undermining by the Whigs; and thus, the Tories might again find favour in his eyes, the only perſons whoſe principles at preſent can ſuſtain alike the king's juſt power, and the peoples lawful rights.

HENCE you ſee a little treaſon is acceptable to the miniſtry of England; it is the buttreſs of their cauſe, it keeps them from falling into contempt

tempt and ruin, and therefore all intelligence of that nature is moſt acceptably received.

THE public news-papers, favoured by the adminiſtration, teem with ſongs and healths filled with treaſon, reported to be ſung and drank in the diſtant cities of England, whilſt affidavits to the contrary are coming daily from the ſame places; thus, the Whigs are labouring by all poſſible means to keep Jacobitiſm alive, and the Tories to exſtinguiſh it; for certain it is, that no future king, who entertains no terror from Jacobites, will continue the adminiſtration in the hands of Whigs, who has the leaſt penetration into the conſequences of what has, and always muſt follow the principles on which they proceed; if he ſhould, he may as well change places with the waxen figure of king William in Weſtminſter abbey, and be gazed at by boys for halfpence, and that figure removed to St. James's to reign, and be drawn to the ——— in the old ſtate-coach four or five times a year for an airing, to prevent both machines from growing mouldy.

THEY tell me too, that the diſgrace of the clergy is another object which the great have in view; and that this is moſt effectually obtained by filling it with ignominious members. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

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LETTER XL.

To the Reverend Father VINCENZO SPINELLO *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NOTHING is ſo frequently met with as diſcontent, in the manners and expreſſions of the Engliſh people, and nothing ſo uncommon as that diſpoſition amongſt the French; a Briton growls at his ſituation in life all day long, and a Frenchman appears pleaſed with his; and yet, the former extols the mode of his government beyond all others in Europe, and affirms, that England is the only land of liberty and happineſs: this, as paradoxical as it ſeems to be, is not owing (as the inhabitants imagine) to the eaſterly winds, fogs or rains, which are in this iſland more frequent than in ſome other parts of the world.

THE mind takes little tincture from winds or weather; whatever diſpoſitions prevail, the

cauſes are to be found in the mind alone, and in mental nature.

If we examine the waywardneſs of an Engliſhman, the little inclination he has to follow any opinion but his own, whether conceived to be right, or preferred becauſe he would have it ſo; we ſhall find ſomething of that kind in him not to be found in a Frenchman.

The ſame cauſe is the ſource of diſcontent as well as waywardneſs, and takes its riſe from the nature of the Engliſh government, as it is at preſent conducted, not as originally conſtituted.

A child born to a great eſtate, the only ſon of a great family, never feels the leaſt curb to his inclinations; he is indulged in every thing reaſonable and unreaſonable, and this naturally brings diſcontent on the mind, a wayward diſpoſition that having been ſoothed by the poſſeſſion of every folly, at laſt, has nothing to deſire and poſſeſs which has not been already granted: it becomes by that means the moſt peeviſh, diſquiet, and diſpleaſed creature upon earth, eternally diſſipated and perplexed.

Human

HUMAN nature cannot ſupport univerſal indulgence and be happy; the ſoul unchecked will no more bear happineſs, than trees unpruned good fruit; it runs wild, ſtraggles into long unbearing branches and leaves, and becomes ſterile. Without reſtraint from many things, it is the nature of man to enjoy nothing; we know not the good of what we have, but by being denied in a great meaſure what we wiſh. Something to purſue, yet unpoſſeſſed, is neceſſary to keep the mind ſweet and wholſome, it will grow putrid like large waters without motion.

THUS, in gentlemen educated from their youth, in a manner which teaches the good of things enjoyed, by the being diſpoſſeſſed of others, the deſire of conforming to the will of their ſuperiors, and obtaining theſe prohibited pleaſures, models their minds and gives them that eaſe and happineſs, which is to be found only in thoſe who have been truly educated.

TO apply this to a whole people, the ſame indulgence when we ſpeak of nations, is to be found amongſt the Engliſh; that is, in the humoured

moured heir of a large eſtate amongſt individuals; they have been long ſpoiled by the indulgence of miniſters, who knowing that to govern wrong and ſecurely, is obtainable only by that licence, every criminal indulgence is nurſed, and there remains but one puniſhable ſin, which is, that of oppoſing the miniſter. In this people, no decorum binds, no laws have reſtraint, it is the avowed maxim that every man has a right to think for himſelf; whereas, no perſon is ſo little to be truſted to any conduct, as a man in general to himſelf. Religion is here juſt what every man conceives it to be, it is predeſtination, free-will, or folly, methodiſm, quakeriſm, preſbyterianiſm, moravianiſm, anythingiſm, nothingiſm, and ten thouſand other enthuſiaſtic vagaries.

THUS, in this caſe as in that of children, indulgence has taken off the joy of what they poſſeſs, and a Briton, compared with other nations, is as wayward and unhappy as a child, that has never been reſtrained, is amongſt thoſe who have been differently educated; from the ſame ſource both take their riſe.

HUMAN nature is as weak at fifty, as at fifteen; objects and purſuits are changed indeed, yet, without more truth in the latter than the firſt; and what is called wiſdom is no other in general, than doing what cuſtom has made more becoming a certain age: it has no difference in the eſſential parts of things, and that diſcretion which we ſo much applaud in ſeventy years, is in general nothing elſe than being tired with old follies, and not having reſolution, or having too much indifference, to purſue new. The Engliſh being unreſtrained ſoon grow weary of all things; that *tædium vitæ*, for which ſenſation they have no word, is the only thing which is left them at forty; how charming is a day's reſt to a labouring man who feels it but rarely? how indifferent is that care to thoſe who never labour? they have poſſeſſed and enjoyed all, and there is nothing to wiſh, unleſs it be that of wiſhing great part of their lives unpaſt.

THIS, methinks, will explain the Engliſh diſpoſition, and the contrary will develope that of the French.

To be happy, we muſt neither be indulged too much, nor reſtrained too violently; the mind of man cannot be truly at eaſe in either ſituation; in the firſt it runs rapidly down like a clock without a pendulum, to ſteady and direct its motions; in the other, it is ſo clogged with parts, that no weight or ſpring can move it.

The French ſeem to have this happy medium; their government, tho' called deſpotic by thoſe who underſtand it not, has juſt that kind of liberty which human nature in opulent ſocieties is able to bear; indulged in all that can reaſonably make the happineſs of a nation, the monarch's will enforcing no more than what the laws of England want to put them in motion, and providing expedients for thoſe momentary reſtraints, which it is difficult to provide in a mixt government, and yet which all governments want.

The inhabitants of France being reſtrained from doing ill by laws and power, the mind does not contract that licentious habit of diſcontent, which the manners of England impart by an univerſal indulgence; it feels its ſtate by being

ing withheld by law and education, with freedom ſufficient to taſte freedom, and not ſated with draughts of luſcious licentiouſneſs, which intoxicate, and efface the reliſh of all happineſs.

THIS ſeems to me to be the cauſe of the difference between the Engliſh and the French; and neither winds or rains, degrees of climates, diet or drink, has made the different diſpoſitions of the two nations.

THE Engliſh, not free but licentious, are diſcontented in all things, and ſtrangers to the joys of true ſocial liberty.

THE French, more controuled by conſtitution, and free in ſocial life, taſte the true ſweets of liberty, which are to be found in living together.

WITH a native of the firſt, we are uncertain of his diſpoſition for two hours together; too proud to indulge any one's inclinations but his own, he becomes as unſocial as an owl, as ominous, diſpleaſing, and to be avoided.

WITH the other, you are ſure of his temper; he is too polite to be changing momentarily like the

the colours of a camelion, or the feathers of a pigeon's neck with every motion; he never fails to pleaſe himſelf by pleaſing you; and yet the Engliſh are called ſteady, and the French a fickle nation, the contrary of which is the truth. The ſuperiority of the French to the Engliſh government, appeared once ſo ſtriking to a Scotch member of parliament, that it produced the following ſtory.

It ſeems there had been a gentleman of that nation in parliament for ſome time, during the reign of Sir Robert Walpole, who had conſtantly given his vote with him, and yet never aſked him any favour; this, conſidering his country, appeared to the miniſter's eyes a more ſtrange phænomenon, than ice in the dog-days; he could by no means reconcile it to himſelf, he put together in his mind Scotland, this man, and aſking no favour, and could not poſſibly bring any ſolution of this ſingular appearance.

Distrusting therefore his being of that country, he acquainted a friend of his with this gentleman's behaviour, and deſired him to bring him to dine at his houſe; where being come, Sir Robert

Robert thanked him for his friendſhip, and then aſking to what reaſon it was owing;

THE Scotch gentleman replied, Sir, I have lived long in France, and from thence am convinced it is the beſt government in the world; and in troth as I ſee you are advancing with all your powers, to bring about a good work of the like kind in England, I am determined my voice ſhall not be wanting to ſo laudable an undertaking.

SIR Robert ſmiled, and there ended the converſation. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER XLI.

To the Reverend Father LORENZO FRANCIOSINI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

MAY it not be ſaid, that the ruling ſpirit of a nation is more or leſs viſible, in the actions of all ſorts of that people which dwells in it, from the common labourer and artizan, to the firſt [redacted] the nation? amidſt the lower claſs it is to be found as conſpicuous as amongſt the higheſt, and the rags and fat living of the workmen of England, ſpeak [redacted] of liberty, as much as the diſregard and [redacted]ention which is to be found amongſt the inhabitants of quality and riches.

THE ruling whimſy of the loweſt people of England, is to be what they call free, and to be careleſs of offending any man. To loſe, in drunkenneſs, all diſtinction between birth and obſcurity, nobility and baſeneſs, underſtanding and ignorance, to affront ſuperiors and defy the laws,

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make what are called the eſſential requiſites of liberty by theſe good people of England.

To ſupport this glowing ſpirit as it ought, and keep the heart warmed with its own magnanimity, nothing is ſo truly effectual as a large quantity of inebriating liquor; in conſequence of this, all decoration is neglected, and in this light the ſhattered coat is to be conſidered only as an old enſign, which has been much torn and ſuffered in the defence of liberty.

Their daily labour is licentiouſly ſwallowed down their throat; liberty is the word; and the artiſt's hands are only employed to find him liquor and inſolence. This is the ruling paſſion of an Engliſh common man, ſpirituous liquors increaſe his ideal freedom, and flatter his ſenſation of greatneſs, 'till he becomes as great as a lord; liberty plucks juſtice by the noſe. "The baby beats the "nurſe, and quite athwart goes all decorum."

SHAKESPEAR.

Owing to this it is, perhaps, that the Indians of America are all great lovers of ſpirituous liquors; it exalts the favourite notions of their own

own proweſs, and every warrior becomes a Hercules by the influence of that inflaming liquor.

To ſhew you what extravagant and unjuſt ideas the people of England have annexed to the word Liberty, give me leave to tell you what I ſaw in the pit of the play-houſe.

It happened that the king, and ſome others of the royal family, were at the comedy that evening; when, according to cuſtom, the company took off their hats; one however, near me, amongſt others, kept his on his head; when taking the liberty to ſpeak to him, and aſking if he paid no reſpect to the appearance of his king? he, knowing by my voice that I was a ſtranger, replied, "That, thank God, they were "a free people, and he would not take off his "hat to any king alive."

Don't imagine this man was attached to the Stuart intereſt, it proceeded only from pure caprice or ill manners, which in ten thouſand different ſhapes is dignified in this land with the celeſtial name of Liberty. During an election of members for Weſtminſter, the popular exclamation

mation was, Liberty, Liberty! and no French ſtrollers! as if a troup of comedians of that nation could deſtroy the liberties of England.

In Naples the contrary of this diſpoſition prevails; there you ſhall ſee a ſmith or common artiſan ſtand at his door with a pair of crimſon velvet breeches decorated with gold lace, and a laced waiſtcoat; liberty is a ſound not known in their country; therefore the moſt favourite idea is to look like a gentleman, which notion flatters him into the expence of a laced ſuit and velvet, and that again into his being a gentleman.

Pomp is ſo much the ſeducing notion of the Neapolitan, that if he cannot hire a boy to walk after his wife to church, he will put on his ſword and follow her himſelf to give her an air of grandeur. An Engliſhman would rob on the highway, or ſell himſelf a ſlave, with as much good will, as follow his wife to church in that manner.

As to matters of the belly, the Neapolitan is eaſily contented; give him only his water-melon with ice, and he may fare as you pleaſe in other reſpects of diet.

THE peaſants wives of that country go to market in a cloth-of-gold jacket, and a ſcarlet petticoat double laced with gold; the aſs which brings her and her wares is alſo charged with the precious load of her inſtrument of muſic, with this ſhe amuſes herſelf during her time of ſtaying at market.

THUS you ſee freedom creates the love of ſtrong liquors, and arbitrary power ſobriety; one loves to warm himſelf into inſolence and contempt of authority, two things which he calls liberty, becauſe he may do it uncontrouled; and the other is afraid of being intoxicated, leſt his lips ſhould utter ſome diſreſpectful or indecent expreſſion, and he ſhould ſuffer for it.

IT may, I think, be fairly collected from the ancients, that the old Italians were no enemies to wine, but indulged their glaſs whilſt freedom laſted amongſt them; which cuſtom they would have preſerved to this hour, if the fear of being betrayed by intemperance to inadvertent expreſſions had not begotten the preſent reigning mode of ſnow-water and fine cloaths.

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THE Sabine and Falernian wine, the delights of Horace and Mæcenas, had never been neglected and unknown had Rome continued free; which is another reaſon for burning his Holineſs in this iſland, and to an Engliſh idea of liberty a calamity not eaſily to be paſſed over with all their philoſophy.

FROM what I have ſaid you may imagine, that this diſpoſition to wine creates no unfrequent inſolence in the ſtreets of London; and yet, ſtrange to tell in this kingdom, this intemperance has an effect not ſo miſchievous as one would expect, if we conſider it in a political light. Adieu.

I am your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER XLII.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO BONINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is a common obſervation, that too much zeal to ſerve frequently degenerates into meanneſs, and diſpleaſes a generous heart more than a becoming attention paid to yourſelf and to him you would oblige; the exceſs of complaiſance deſtroys the whole effect of it, and very often entirely diſappoints the expectations of him that pays it: it is dangerous to give too much of any thing, leſt by the frequency of it the minds of the receivers become accuſtomed to that manner of treatment, and ſlight the giver, who rather ſeems to be profuſe in his donations than generous in his ſpirit; yet would they entirely deſert him if he ſhould be remiſs in the uſual cuſtoms, which he has ſo long continued. Such is the nature of man in general.

IT is not in behaviour of common life alone that this exceſs of giving may deſtroy the effect of it. The full enjoyment of every object, the moſt deſired by the inhabitants of this world from the cradle to the grave, makes the poſſeſſor rather unhappy, by having never taſted the difference which attends the want of them, than bleſſed with their poſſeſſion. This very frequently creates inattention in nations, as well as in private men; and often dupes the miniſter to the artifices of other kingdoms, as it does the individual to the ſchemes of thoſe about him.

NOTHING is ſo common in this kingdom, as to ſee a young gentleman born to wealth and every thing neceſſary for happineſs, who has ſcarce taſted diſappointment in his pleaſures during youth, to become tired and inattentive, and without ever being profuſe or even generous, his eſtate moulders into ruin by the corroding power of thoſe ſycophants who ſurround him; and this entirely owing to inattention and neglect of examining his affairs.

SOMETHING like this ſeems to be the diſpoſition of the Engliſh miniſtry; they have ſuffered the kingdom to crumble into duſt; and, mortgaging one revenue after another thro' careleſsneſs of remedying it in times of peace, it at preſent can ſcarce produce income ſufficient for the neceſſary ſupplies and occurrences of the year, and is become diſabled from oppoſing its enemies in time of war.

THE country gentleman, who in this ſituation is neighbour to another who is not, is ſure to have his lands invaded by the latter; he kills the game which the other breeds, and preſerves his own. The negligence of one increaſes the inſolence of the other: they each know one another's circumſtances, and ſuffering on one ſide is the natural conſequence of the needy and negligent, as preſumption is of him who is at eaſe and in full riches.

METHINKS the Engliſh are in the ſituation of the inattentive and needy man, and the French in that of the active and wealthy; and the ſame effects follow, in conſequence of this behaviour,

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in the two nations, which are conſequent in thoſe of the individuals.

OWING to this it ſeems to be, that in the Eaſtern and Weſtern colonies the French attack the ſubjects of this country, and treat them with a ſlight which could never have proceeded but from a thorough knowledge of the ſituation of the ſupplies of this nation, and an abſolute contempt for the miniſter which directs them. They know perfectly that at preſent this people can but badly ſuſtain the expence of a war, and that the miniſter underſtands little how to direct a kingdom in that circumſtance; they are convinced by experience of his puſillanimity, and judging of the powers of a nation not by the money which it can raiſe alone, but by the wiſdom of thoſe who muſt direct its fleets and armies, proceed in conſequence of that knowledge, and conſtantly attain ſome advantage in peace by attempting ſomething like war.

THE French know that this miniſter will and muſt bear much before an open rupture can be declared by him; and, making the proper uſe of human knowledge, creep inſenſibly on the

poſſeſſions which the Engliſh ſubjects have ſettled in America. 'Tis probable they will not ceaſe till they come to the ſea ſhore; their purſuit is one ſettled and uniform plan which is more or leſs followed in war and peace. The Engliſh after a treaty ſet their hearts at eaſe, and their neighbours are for ever active.

IT has been commonly ſaid by the Engliſh, during the laſt War, that tho' the French conquered on the continent, that they reaped no advantage by it.

THIS ſeems, in my opinion, to be a very great miſtake: is not leſſening the powers of England, by running it thirty millions more in debt, a very conſiderable advantage? a greater one than if it had bankrupted the nation; this load ſettles upon their backs, which, as a kingdom, is as much as it can well bear. And tho' the rich individuals don't appear to feel in their private fortunes the ill effects of this debt which has loaded them ſo inſenſibly, yet thoſe who ſee things with moſt perſpicuity and impartiality, know the perilous ſtate this iſland is in.

HAD the war been continued till the funds had been all deſtroyed, individuals would then have complained more grievouſly than they do at preſent; the loſs of ſome millions revenue would have been ſeverely felt by the inhabitants whoſe effects lay in thoſe funds; but the whole nation, having thrown off that load, would have recovered its ſtrength, like a lion ſick at the time of changing his coat, and come abroad more terrible when it was over, or a ſerpent in the deſert of Lybia, more vigorous after the ſhedding its old ſkin.

THIS nation diſencumbered of its debts, would be a much more potent enemy than it can be at preſent to the French nation; the natural revenues which it produces now in peace, would then afford millions to oppoſe them, and what at preſent pays the intereſt of their debts, would ſupply fleets, armies, and money to ſuſtain their colonies, and the people then be no more taxed in war than now in times of peace.

METHINKS, then, the Gallic nation has obtained no inconſiderable advantage by the laſt war,

war, even ſomething more than if their conqueſts had been greater; it has reduced England almoſt to a dilemma that has bound her hands. The miniſter dares not go to war, becauſe of the difficulty of finding ſupplies, and there appears no great inclination to pay the national debts.

THE Dutch with all the barrier towns in Flanders diſmantled, will ſcarce ſhew more readineſs now, than in the laſt war, to become heartily the Britiſh allies, when nothing prevents their towns from being attacked on the firſt declaration of war, and an irreconcilable anger between the king of Pruſſia, and the empreſs of Germany, on account of Sileſia is another advantage to France.

IT ſeems to me, therefore, that the French were never in ſo promiſing a way to be a very great nation, as at preſent; nor England ever ſo likely to be leſs: the firſt encourage arts, ſciences and commerce, and having reduced the Engliſh to the ſtate they wiſh, as well as the Dutch, having baniſhed from their own imaginations that viſion of univerſal empire, they now ſeem to be in the purſuit of that which muſt terminate in the aggrandizing their kingdom,

dom, beyond that ſhare which it ought to have in Europe.

WHILST in England, there is a droniſh, lethargic diſeaſe, that has crept upon the ſouls of men in power, as if they had all drank opium, or that the natural conſequence of working much in the raiſing money, had produced a paralytic ſtate in their faculties, as it does on the limbs of thoſe who are engaged in digging it in the mines.

CERTAIN it is, that no nation has at preſent leſs reaſon to be content with itſelf, than England; deficient in the knowledge of the nature of man, and conſequently in the art of governing, reſting all its powers and efforts on the influence of money, till it has almoſt exhauſted that reſource, not conſidering that gold is inanimate matter, and tho' when put in motion it has great effect, yet that the ſpirit which directs it, only imparts the advantage which ought to be expected from it.

IT may bribe the people of this nation to be at eaſe, with reſpect to what ſhall befall them;

it may purchaſe individuals of another to coincide in their ſchemes; but this is a temporary expedient which only prolongs ruin, comes a Machault in France, whoſe hands are yet undefiled with plundering his country, and his heart unſtained with venal or ſelfiſh ideas, and the influence of Engliſh gold is as ineffectual as rain to diſſolve adamant.

THE probity and perſpicuity of that man is a greater cauſe of fear to this nation, than all the French fleets and armies; what cannot be effected by the union of thoſe powers joined with reſolution, and what is not to be apprehended from the ſhort-ſightedneſs of a nation, which leaves itſelf undefended againſt its only natural enemy, its colonies unprotected from the ſame people, its commerce unencouraged, arts and ſciences unprotected, one univerſal anarchy through neglect of police and religion, with corruption and perjury reigning over all the hearts of the lower claſs of people? ſuch is the preſent ſtate of this once illuſtrious iſle.

IT gives me pain when I behold this, and aſtoniſhment at the inattention which the natives pay to their perilous ſituation; I own I love them for their ancient virtues, and wiſh ſome favourable hour may reinſtate them in their former luſtre, alas! I fear. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER XLIII.

To the Reverend Father FRANCESCO BERTINI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

THIS kingdom ſeems to me to be a living leſſon of what we read in the hiſtories of ancient Rome; we ſee here what we find written in our hiſtorians; and the conſtitutions reſembling one another in ſome reſpects, the analogy is more ſtriking, than it can be in countries whoſe form of government differs more from the republican, than this does from the Roman. I have frequently imagined, that in governments which differ in their eſtabliſhments, there ſhould not only be laws peculiar to each, relating to property; but ſome even which ſhould reſtrain the accumulation of wealth beyond a certain degree: will the republican and mixt bear exceſſive riches, tho' perhaps they may be indulged to any exceſs in a monarchic or abſolute ſtate?

WHAT I would be underſtood to ſay, is this, that a deſpotic ſtate can bear to poſſeſs more riches without hurting its welfare, than a repub-

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lic or mixt government; it appears to me, this has the glimmering of truth; pray tell me what you think, when you have heard my opinion.

LET us then ſuppoſe, and as it really is originally conſtituted in this kingdom, that the king has his powers limited in ſome inſtances, and the people in others; that the executive is lodged in the hands of the firſt, and the legiſlative in the hands of the latter, and that the people have a right of chooſing great part of this legiſlative body, for their repreſentatives in the aſſembly of their nation.

THIS latter makes the republican part of the Engliſh conſtitution, all which ſhould be choſen by their compatriots, from that natural aſcendency which good ſenſe and virtue have over the minds of men; theſe are, in a nation where nature has not been totally defaced, the qualities which create that original authority which one man has over the minds and diſpoſitions of many; this ſuperiority they would have continued to exert, had not the introduction of too much wealth into private hands, deſtroyed their effect; it has

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placed the private good of every individual in oppoſition to that of the general, and the thief with money has more authority than Epaminondas, was he an Engliſhman, would have without it.

THIS acquired power of riches, has totally ſupplanted all the influence of human excellencies over the minds of men; and Cataline with gold would be preferred to Fabricius without it, in nine of every ten boroughs in the iſland.

MONEY then having this influence on the human heart, counter-acts that weight which ſuperior underſtanding, ſuperior virtue, and ſuperior abilities of all kinds, ought, according to the true fabric of nature, to poſſeſs in the nation where they are found.

THESE original powers of man were firſt implanted in a few, by the author of all, for the good of all who were of the ſame tribe or nation.

THE valour and prudence of one man, by that prevalency which theſe qualifications have

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on the opinion of his fellow-countrymen, become the good of the whole, and creates him their general in times of war and danger; this brought Cincinnatus from the plough.

THE ſame may be ſaid of wiſdom in the miniſter, piety in the prieſt, and probity in the legiſlators of a country; the ſame powers which give men authority over others by enjoying theſe excellencies, make it the public utility that they ſhould be in power; the cauſe of chooſing operates to the advantage of thoſe who elect, and all the community receives one mutual benefit, from this ſuperiority of a few members, and the propenſity to yield ſubmiſſion to them in the multitude.

THUS in nature, the powers amongſt men which gain the aſcendant, are thoſe which ought to obtain it; authority and ſubmiſſion become one reciprocal advantage: hence without doubt have riſen all the different governments in the world, and in this way it is ſtill continued amongſt the nations of America; wiſdom and valour impart power and authority to the poſ-

ſeſſors; the ſubordination which preſerves the whole, is juſtly preſerved by it.

WHATEVER then in a nation tends to deſtroy the influence of theſe original qualifications, ſo far tends to ſubvert the government; for nature has never yet ſuffered a right effect to be produced by a wrong cauſe, and conſequently every artificial ſupply muſt ſooner or later fail, and prove deſtructive.

IN this kingdom, where I am, this acquired and falſe authority of wealth has totally prevailed over the natural and true; all ſubordination is vaniſhed, virtue, underſtanding, and every other quality which influence in [illegible]inal nature, have loſt all prevalency.

FROM this it follows, that the deepeſt briber being elected in the place of the deepeſt thinker or worthieſt man, the good of the electors and elected are become ſeparate things, and the man who has given them ten thouſand pounds for their votes, has ten thouſand vices and inclinations to ſatisfy by means of it.

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THIS principle of venal influence in this manner, running from the loweſt to the higheſt, is it not to be feared, that hereafter all men may be choſen into offices of ſtate, for the ſake of their power of giving money, or ſerving him that is then at the head of the treaſury? and the whole authority which human perfections ought to poſſeſs, no longer influence in the favour of any one?

GENERALS, admirals, ſecretaries, and all the long liſt of miniſterial men, may obtain their offices by means of ſome ſiniſter influence, and not the natural; even down to the mayor or portrieve of a paultry corporation.

IN this manner it may happen, that tho' riches increaſe the means of making a ſtate, like this, great in one reſpect, they may deſtroy it in another; and the depriving men of ſuperior abilities, of that authority which they ought to poſſeſs, hurts a nation a thouſand times more effectually, than the advantages which attend wealth can do it ſervice.

FOR this reaſon it ſeems neceſſary, that to preſerve a nation happy and free which is conſtituted like this, to have miniſters which would be revered abroad, and loved at home; it ſhould have laws enacted to prohibit the increaſe of wealth in the individuals, beyond a certain ſum, the exceſs of which ſhould be depoſited in the public treaſury.

THIS, indeed at preſent, would appear very viſionary and ideal, in the opinion of the preſent ſtateſmen; yet, Lycurgus carried the reſtraint of money to a much greater height than is now neceſſary, and preſerved the conſtitution of Sparta whilſt that reſtraint continued; and tho' an Engliſhman would not chooſe to lye upon hurdles, and eat black broth, yet he might reaſonably endeavour to give thoſe excellencies in nature that weight which was originally deſigned them, and preſerve that country which every man ought to love, becauſe it is his own.

THIS I flatter myſelf will explain the reaſon, why virtue has been obſerved to be the protecting power of republics, and the ruin of them followed

followed the deſertion of that celeſtial influence, by the introduction of riches. Does it not appear abſolutely certain, that this ſiniſter influence of wealth, creating one univerſal depravation in the minds of thoſe who elect the repreſentatives, who ſhould govern in a nation, has deprived every ruined republic of the uſe of thoſe virtues and perfections of humanity, which would have preſerved it.

IT is not becauſe there are not at preſent men of abilities, probity, and underſtanding, in England, that the miniſtry is ſuppoſed to be compoſed of a different kind of men; but from this reaſon, as thoſe ſuperior qualities are rarely joined with wealth or ambition, theſe ſlide into corners, or are not able to win authority thro' want of that baſtard power of riches, which has uſurped the throne of the legal heirs of it, the exalted attributes of mental nature.

METHINKS it was this pernicious power of riches, which ruined the Carthaginian ſtate; in commercial nations, a rich and ſelfiſh merchant overbears the man of ſmall property, vaſt integrity, and ſound intellects; the nation's wel-

fare in his intereſted eyes, is the ſucceſs of his own private buſineſs; hogſheads of tobacco, barrels of rice, tuns of ſugar, and bales of cotton, make, in the opinion of the ſeparate traders in theſe commodities, the nation's whole concern; circumſcribed in knowledge, and hood-winked by lucre, they would preſs all mankind to their private advantage, and ſpread yet farther the thirſt of money, and the fatal effects which attend it.

TELL me whether theſe men are right in their practice, or I in the judgment of what I have ſent you.

I am your moſt obedient ſervant.

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LETTER XLIV.

To the Reverend Father VINCENZO SPINELLO, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

I AM much pleaſed with your approving of what I have ſaid on the influence of money, in republican and mix'd governments; and not a little flatter'd with your requeſt of ſeeing my reaſons for what I have aſſerted in relation to monarchic ſtates being able to bear a greater degree of riches, than thoſe which I have already mention'd.

IN ſtates where any part of the legiſlative or governing power is elective, the people, after they are once become venal, can pay no regard but to money; this purchaſes their ſelf-love, in oppoſition to the love of their country: the heart of man in money-loving kingdoms, is not proof againſt the ſeduction of ſelf-intereſt;

and it inevitably happens that the public benefit, grown old and infirm, is ſtrangled by the hands of private advantage in full vigour.

Too many people of great riches, in a free nation, create an equality which is detrimental to the whole; nobility is but little worth, where a man of the meaneſt birth, and baſeſt education, can make part of the legiſlative power: in this kingdom a taylor with three hundred a year, may be a member of parliament and cut out laws as he did garments; and if he has ten thouſand a year, he may make his *quietus* with a borough; tho' not with a bare bodkin, as Hamlet ſays, yet with a large ſum of money, and be prefer'd to the deſcendant of a Howard.

Hence you may ſee, that money, baniſhing all other excellencies, becomes the ſole envied object; it gives power and ſuperiority, and happily ſupplies to the ignorant what they want in worth and underſtanding. A nobleman, tho' he makes part of the legiſlature, is more on a level with a commoner in this kingdom, than in any other upon earth.

For this reaſon it happens that the inhabitants, poſtponing every other conſideration, lay their whole ſtreſs on getting rich, and neglect making themſelves wiſe, as a matter leſs demanding attention.

Is it then abſurd to reſtrain this rage of money, and ſubduing every human qualification of ſuperior excellence to that pernicious power, eſpecially in this conſtitution, where the increaſing deſire of it has already been almoſt the ruin of the kingdom?

In a monarchic ſtate, all honors proceeding from the crown, the power of riches is much inferior to what it is in a mixt or republican; tho' money is not without influence, in ſuch nations it has much leſs than in others, and tho' it may poſſibly purchaſe the ruling power of a miniſter, it cannot long preſerve and protect him in that place, without acquitting himſelf with addreſs.

Whereas a miniſter of England, once elected by faction, or intereſt, may be ſuſtain'd by his

his venal friends, in oppoſition to the king and the peoples rights and inclinations; he that can rule the parliament, rules both, and is at eaſe.

A MONARCH always places honors above wealth; there is in that ſtate ſome ſubordination. A nobleman of France is what no citizen can be, and ſomething which every citizen muſt reſpect, and pay regard to; no riches can make the latter a companion for the firſt, but by condeſcenſion: Whereas in England a peer of the realm, and an importer of wine, if the latter be rich, are ſo near upon a level in company and privilege, if the merchant be in parliament, that beſides their titles there is ſcarce any difference worth ſix-pence.

THE church and army are inferior to commerce in the preſent mode of thinking; thus ſubordination is due only to money, and two men of any profeſſion are equally eſteemed, who are equally rich; from him whoſe art is of ſervice to his country, and has ſpent his life in ſtudy, to him who behind the counter ſells hobnails by the hundred.

In

In a monarchic ſtate, the men of ſuperior qualifications will at laſt ſucceed, becauſe it is the monarch's intereſt to have them near his perſon. The king of Pruſſia would fetch a general from the wilds of Siberia, who excelled all other men; and purchaſe a negro from the middle of Africa, who could improve his nation's commerce and welfare; he would beſtow immenſe ſums to draw Homer from the ſhades, to converſe with Solon, Numa, and Lycurgus, and at laſt find perhaps, included in himſelf, the ſcience of them all.

Whereas, there have been miniſters in this iſland, who would have tranſported ſuch men, were they to be found in England, to the countries from whence the Pruſſian king would draw them, and ſpread the reign of ignorance, as wide as they did their own.

It is the intereſt of a monarch, to be directed by the wiſeſt heads of a nation; and of a miniſter in a mixt government, to have the weakeſt in his troop, over which he may govern.

IT is difficult to find much ſubmiſſion in men of genius, the crown of knowledge ſeldom reſpects the cap of folly; it is dangerous therefore, for a weak miniſter to employ abler heads, at leaſt he is timid, and fears his reſidence will be but ſhort, when good ſenſe becomes an inmate in the ſame houſe, to which he is not equal.

MONEY then, in monarchic ſtates, cannot find its way to be arbitrary, as it does in others; the king cannot be long purchaſed from his intereſt, tho' the people may; and therefore, that native influence of ſuperior ſenſe and virtue, is ſurer to ſucceed, and longer remain in ſuch a government, than in thoſe of other kinds; for theſe reaſons, it ſeems to me, to be no greater hardſhip to live under the influence of a monarch, where the miniſters are choſen for their real deſerts, than in a government where all is influenced by money, and the choice of them is owing to that or faction; and tho' one may be called a free ſtate, and the other an arbitrary, yet perhaps, as much eſſential freedom and true happineſs is to be found in the former, as in the latter;

latter; and a French ſlave has equal liberty with a free Briton, in the real conduct and courſe of things.

NOBILITY and honors being reſpected in France, money not having the power to govern, and good underſtanding and knowledge of all kinds finding yet that influence which they originally derive from nature, wealth may more ſafely be permitted to increaſe in that kingdom, than in England; it cannot there ſubvert the ways of providence, by giving to gold what is due to virtue; and, as in this iſland, placing the cap of folly on the head of liberty, hood-wink and entice her to ruin, as a cur leads a blind beggar to the places and dangers he pleaſes.

THUS then, the money which will ruin a free ſtate, may preſerve an abſolute; the ſubordination which is eſtabliſhed makes honor the great motive to all, and the univerſal preſervative in a monarchy: the levelling idea, which money introduces into a mixt government, expels all juſt authority, and ruins the ſtate which virtue only can preſerve; ſuch is the condition and advantage of France, and ſuch the fate and

folly

folly of England. I fear I ſhall tarry here long enough, to ſee the laſt gaſp of true liberty, and England fall, like Rome, a prey to its own natives; for to the cauſe I have already aſſigned was it not owing, that the Roman liberty ſunk in the arms of the Cæſars? Shows, bribes, and pecuniary rewards, ſeduced the people from the choice of virtue, to the love of wealth and pleaſure; to preferring thoſe whoſe iniquitous deſigns preſented them with the latter, to the former whoſe virtue would not permit them ſuch behaviour. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER XLV.

To the Rev. Father FABIO MARETTI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IF I am not miſtaken, I have ſomewhere read, that it was once a matter of debate amongſt the Athenians, whether they ſhould permit another ſtring to be added to the lyre, whoſe power was already known to be ſo extenſive and prevalent, over the minds of men.

A SUBJECT of this kind would at preſent be looked upon by the ſenate of this kingdom, from whence I write, as a moſt frivolous enquiry, and not worthy the attention of men of underſtanding.

YET to me it ſeems neceſſary, in all kinds of government, that every thing which can prevail upon the paſſions, the ſource of action in moſt men, ſhould be ſtrictly ſcrutinized before it be permitted; and tho' it be granted, that muſic

muſic may have power to charm ſavages from their fierceneſs, may it not have alſo the effect of ſoothing civilized nations from manhood, and thus introduce as great an inconveniency as advantage?

IT is true, there are martial as well as tender powers in muſic, and the ſame ſtrings which ſoothe the lovers pain, may animate the ſoldier's glory; beſides this, there is yet another ill conſequence which attends this art, which is, that the frequency of being preſent at entertainments of muſic, may deſtroy the power of both, and thus the utility which ſhould be derived from harmony, be loſt in the frequent repetition of it; or even in ſome minds, whoſe compoſition is more harmonious than others, it may draw attention from things of greater moment, and drown the eſteem of uſeful ſcience in a flood of ſeducing pleaſure.

FOR ſome one or other of theſe reaſons, I ſuppoſe, his holineſs has forbidden all wind muſic aſſiſting at high maſs, the organ excepted; he has found, I preſume, that the voluntaries

of

of the flutes and hautboys had claimed greater attention and deference from the audience, than the elevation of the hoſt, and high maſs: the eſſential duty of a catholic was poſtponed to the pleaſure and powers of muſic, which ought to be its diverſion; in truth that the zeal for hearing the inſtruments of theſe maſters, had diſſipated that for prayer and proſtration before the deity.

THIS, tho' an Engliſhman who gave me the account ſeem'd to think extremely ridiculous, I cannot avoid approving, as whatever ſeduces men from their religious duty, is an object of a ſovereign's care. When the concerto was finiſh'd, it ſeems, the greateſt number of the audience left their devotion and the church, without attending the moſt eſſential part of their duty.

AN indulgence of this kind converts a temple dedicated to heaven, into a theatre, and changes religion to amuſement, till the mind becomes pleaſed with nothing but the muſic, and the duty of offering up our prayers to heaven is evaporated in the joy of hearing an inchanting

piece of harmony breathed from the lips of a ſkilful muſician: this is preferring decoration to uſe.

SOMETHING like this has been the conſequence of preaching twice every Sunday in the churches of England; the audience are become critics in ſermons, and nine in ten frequent churches for no other reaſon, than that of deciding whether the preacher be a good orator or not, it is no longer duty but diverſion; prayer is contemned and neglected, and the oration the only thing worth their attention, without which the churches are empty.

AT the reformation, when the peoples minds were to be converted from popery to proteſtantiſm, it was thought requiſite that ſermons ſhould be deliver'd twice a day, to change the ſentiments of thoſe who were bred catholics; and perhaps at that time ſuch harangues from the pulpit were abſolutely neceſſary to gain on the hearers, and bring them over to that change of worſhip.

BUT it happen'd in that reſpect as it has ſince, at the revolution; the very things which were then uſeful, have been ſince render'd detrimental by their continuation, and the proceeding in the ſame way produced a continual ſcene of changing, till the effects of theſe cauſes want as much to be oppoſed, both in the church and ſtate, as thoſe of popery and arbitrary power did at the time of the reformation and revolution.

PREACHING againſt the catholic religion, has at laſt preached all religion out of the kingdom; and acting on preſbyterian and Whig principles, all government.

THE firſt has created a contempt for doing the duty of a chriſtian, in making ſermons the chief object of the peoples attention in religious acts; and the latter a ſlight for the idea of kings, in making the miniſter the ruling power, in contradiction to the ſovereign's rights, and peoples liberties.

THIS nation ſeems at preſent in that dead calm, which is obſerved to precede a ſtorm;

and heaven only knows what the workings of this ocean of people may throw up after the tempeſt which muſt agitate it, is ſubſided.

IF it perſiſts long in this way, it will exhibit a new phænomenon in political nature, that a nation can hold together without the uniting principles of religion and government (for I cannot call the names of things their realities); moſt certain it is, that the active powers of theſe two parts are almoſt totally annihilated.

THINGS appear in this light but to few, I own, and the foreboder of evil is the deriſion of moſt; yet ſurely the hour will come, when this divination will be accompliſhed, and the liberties of England be overwhelm'd and buried by ſome irruption, not leſs fatal than thoſe terrible eruptions of Veſuvius, which have buried men, herds, and cities, in one common grave; alien as I am, I cannot avoid weeping over this ſickening ſtate, and wiſh that a new land of liberty may riſe, Phœnix like, from the aſhes of the old. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LET-

LETTER XLVI.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

AFTER having long lived in this iſland, and as I imagine, having made myſelf ſomething acquainted with the manners and capacity of the natives, I ſee no reaſon to repent being born an Italian, and tho' not replete with all the glory of an old, yet not diſpleaſed with the lot of being a modern, Roman.

METHINKS, if the producing great men in all kinds of human excellency, be an honor to a country, Italy bids the faireſt in the world for that reputation.

THO' it muſt be allow'd, that this iſle has produced men of genius in all kinds of literature, and ſome equal to what any nation has ever bred, yet there are other parts of genius, in

which it has been very deficient; the pencil has never ſhone in the hand of an excellent painter, nor the chiſſel mimick'd life, in that of a ſculptor, who have been natives of this kingdom; and tho' perhaps amongſt the ancient Romans there were none truly excellent in either of thoſe arts, who were born Italians, yet the revival of letters and genius in Tuſcany, has given birth to maſters in each way, which have excell'd all the modern world, and rival'd the old.

MUSIC too has received its powers and honors from the Italian genius, and no European nation has been the parent of artiſts in this ſtudy, who have merited any compariſon with the muſicians of Italy.

IN this ſcience alſo England has yet produced no great maſter, tho' at preſent the natives are much advanced in the true taſte and knowledge of muſic.

THAT the church has ſpread her influence more or leſs over all the world, from the chair which receives our ſovereign pontiff, is a truth which will admit of no diſpute.

OF what nation then could a man be born, where ſo much honor could be drawn from his place of nativity, as from the land of Italy; and tho' the Engliſh reproach us with the name of ſlaves, let them ſupport their freedom as long as we did ours, and then we will allow them the merit of preſerving that liberty which they aſſume. I have often reflected on the different conqueſts, which have been made by Italians over the face of Europe; we firſt conquer'd the valour of all mankind by arms, then the underſtanding by letters; to which, and to our language, all Europe has been ſubdued; the ſoul was ſubmitted to religious influence, from the ſee of Rome; the muſic, painting, and ſculpture of Italy have obtain'd homage from all the nations of Europe: what is yet more ſingular than all the other phænomena, ſcience and letters have twice riſen to their zenith in that land.

WHAT is there in nature in that ſpot which at different times imparted to man theſe excellencies, a thing unknown to any other nation upon the globe?

THE very remains of ancient Rome are a delight, which can never take place in this country; for, tho' buildings may tumble into duſt in all nations, what land can boaſt to have produced ſuch illuſtrious inhabitants, whoſe characters are conſtantly annex'd to the ruins of Rome? I am ſuſpicious the Britiſh ſenate, ſo fond of being thought to reſemble the Roman, has produced no beings which can in any ſenſe compare with thoſe of ancient Rome. Where ſhall we find a Brutus, Scævola, Fabricius, Regulus, Decii, Scipios, and Ciceros, in the liſt of thoſe who have fill'd the Engliſh ſenate-houſe; will ſir Thomas More anſwer to them all?

METHINKS, a nation ſettled into arbitrary power, is preferable to one which is breaking into that ſtate, as a ſterile land is preferable to a tempeſtuous ocean.

THE moments which paſs in thoſe deſtructive times, are terrible to the inhabitants of thoſe countries where they happen. I ſhall there-

fore

fore as ſoon as poſſible quit this iſland, before this Sampſon of a miniſter in blindneſs, and mere brutal ſtrength, pulls down the pillars of the conſtitution, and buries himſelf and his fellow-ſubjects beneath its ruins.

WHEN this calamity has happen'd, will there then remain the ſounds of dulcet harmony, to ſoothe their diſtreſs; the charms of painting and ſculpture to faſcinate the mind, and withhold it from reflecting on its loſt condition, as in the city where I drew my firſt breath?

THE poor, and rich if any remain, will they then have that enthuſiaſm which warms the heart of penury in acts of devotion, that ſpreads itſelf tho' all Italy, will their diſtreſs awake their vows to heaven, and their ſufferings recall the baniſh'd comfort of religion?

I FEAR, alas! it will not be prudent to remain here; let me retire like the ſtork, to other realms, before the everlaſting winter of this land arrives. Expect me in Italy, and receive me as

Your moſt devoted and humble ſervant.

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

To the Reverend Father DOMINICO MANZONI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

I MAKE no doubt of your having read the *ſiécle de Lovis quatorze*, written by Monſr. de Voltaire; and being pleaſed with his manner of recounting all that is neceſſary in a reign to be known by men of true underſtanding, and juſt taſte.

AMONGST other things, I could not avoid obſerving two which relate to England; one of which does this nation much honor, and the other is by no means true.

THE firſt is, what he ſays relating to Henrietta, ſiſter of Charles the ſecond; whom, after having given her the deſcription and praiſe ſhe merited, he aſſigns as the perſon who introduced taſte and politeneſs amongſt the women of Paris; beings who at that time, according to the picture which he has given of them, at the coming of the queen

queen of Sweden to that city, were very different from what they are at this hour.

THIS acknowledgment in favour of Engliſh ladies, is without doubt, an honor to the ſex in England; and if the ſame care had been continued in their education, and manner of living together, the Britiſh dames would to this hour have ſurpaſſed the French, as much as they did in that time; they want nothing but that culture, and their manners.

THE other remark is certainly not true, where he ſays, that ſcience and literature paſt from Italy thro' France into England; if it began firſt in Florence, it certainly leaped from thence into this kingdom; the very beſt Engliſh writers have lived before the revival of letters in France.

SIR Thomas More, Shakeſpeare, Ben Johnſon, Beaumont and Fletcher, theſe four in the dramatic way, are yet much eſteemed; the firſt of them the greateſt genius which any nation has produced, and the preſent ſupport of the theatre.

SPENCER

SPENCER in another kind of poetry, excellent and immortal; Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, and many others, who are to this day the honor and eſteem of England, and Engliſhmen.

WHAT truth then can there be in what Monſieur Voltaire ſays, in reſpect of the Engliſh having derived ſcience from the reign of Lewis the fourteenth, when theſe writers were dead before he was born, and the Engliſh ſtage at the perfection it is at preſent?

THIS then, muſt have riſen from deſign or malice, neither of which can have any effect on thoſe who read him, and know the hiſtory of this kingdom; he muſt certainly be better acquainted with what relates to literature in England, than he appears to be in this account.

METHINKS it is impoſſible in thinking of of this man, to avoid reflecting how intimately the greateſt meanneſs may be allied, in the human compoſition, with the moſt exalted talents,

and

and a bad heart deſtroy the powers of an able underſtanding.

THIS very man is a moſt convincing inſtance of this truth; with powers of intellect which might gain an aſcendant over all underſtandings; with an aptitude and facility of expreſſing his ſentiments, not to be found but in few; conciſe and clear without deſcending into frivolous littleneſſes in remarks; preciſe in his obſervations, leaving enough to chance and the courſe of things, and yet, aſſigning ſufficiently to the intervention and deſign of man, for the honor of human nature.

WHAT a mortifying thing it is to ſay, after all this, that a littleneſs of ſoul, mixt with this underſtanding, has debaſed this man to the commiſſion of the meaneſt actions.

HIS baſe jealouſy of Maupertuis, has loſt him his reputation, and his trifling with the king of Pruſſia the Friendſhip of that monarch; fallen from a ſituation to be envied by every man, who would chuſe to paſs his life in that delicious manner, which can only be enjoyed

joyed by the friend and companion of a king, in whom royalty and ſcience have made a perfect union, the rareſt phænomenon upon earth; the great comet will probably make a hundred revolutions, before they may be again found ſo perfectly combined in the head of a monarch.

WHO then in looking on the underſtanding of Voltaire, muſt not pity him in this loſs; who that turns his eyes on the qualities of his heart, muſt not deſpiſe him for deſerving it?

ALAS! ſuch is the condition of ſuperior intellects, that nature ſeems to have taken pleaſure in humbling their ſuperiority, by ſome inferior qualities blended in the heart, which reduces almoſt all men to the ſame level; a Verulam and a Voltaire have only proved the wideſt vibration of the pendulum, from the fartheſt point of ſuperior knowledge, to the oppoſite of extreme folly, between which all the various characters of human kind may be found.

WITH

WITH extremes in neither, may I live uncareſſed by the greateſt, beloved by the beſt, and taſting neither exaltation nor debaſement, die your friend, and that of mankind. Adieu, I am,

Moſt affectionately

Your moſt obedient,

LET.

LETTER XLVIII.

To the Reverend Father FABIO MARETTI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IS it not true, that mankind in their accounts of nature's productions, have made their circle ſhorter than they ought, and not enough attended to the whole progreſs which ſhe takes?

PERHAPS, if we could penetrate into the parts which compoſe this univerſe, we ſhould diſcover all to be the ancient philoſophy of the TOUT, and in fact, no more than one eternal ſyſtem of truth and perfection.

WE are accuſtomed to ſee, that every ſpring puſhes forth the leaves and bloſſoms, the juicy ſummer ſwells, and the purple autumn ripens the cluſtering grape, and then conclude the proceſs finiſhed.

THIS

THIS is the annual courſe of nature in producing that fruit, ſhort, and of ſix months operations only; yet, this is not the whole proceſs of that ſingle production: years varying in themſelves, may generate the moſt perfect fruit but once in a hundred; and this enlarges the circle of nature in that reſpect, and indicates that to know all the effects of ſuns, rains, and other cauſes, of the greateſt excellency in the fruits of the earth, we ſhould attend a longer circulation, than the ſhort-lived revolution of ſix months.

PERHAPS the whole combining cauſes of this effect are not happily united but once in an age, and the perfect wine of Burgundy is as rare as a comet; tho' wine be the production of every year, as ſtars are every evening's proſpect.

THE ſame ſeems to be true in regard to mankind; tho' every year produces numbers of men, much reſembling one another in form and underſtanding; yet, the happy union which creates genius comes extremely rare, and is in like manner a phænomenon of more than centuries, to

produce a comet upon earth; which, contrary to thoſe in the heavens, is leſs gazed at and admired during its reign amongſt the leſſer mortals, than when it has paſſed away, and is no longer viſible but in its effects and remains.

THOSE whoſe penetration fanſies that all mankind have been alike at all times, are extremely ſuperficial; were the old Britons like the preſent? And did the old Romans reſemble thoſe of Nero and Caligula's reign? Who was there in theſe latter times at Rome, who would have imitated the ſelf-devoted Decii? Will an Engliſhman at preſent reſign his head to be ſevered from his body, becauſe he cannot renounce the oath which he has taken, as did the virtue of Sir Thomas More? will he ſmile at the executioner, and with a ſerenity of ſoul meet the block, as eaſily as a table ſpread with dainties? No fires will ever more be lighted, to burn a willing martyr in this land, and perhaps in no other in Europe; the ſpirit is fled.

IN genius, as in reſolution; in ſuperior ſenſe, as well as ſuperior firmneſs of mind; in the ſoul, as in fruits and flowers; there are points of time

in

in a national hiſtory, which are more excellent than others.

PERHAPS ſome refined and ſubtler capacity may ſee the cauſes of the exaltation of theſe faculties in men; but whoever looks on them at the hour of their being in higheſt perfection, has his eye turned on a wrong point of time.

WHATEVER muſt be the combining powers, which produce theſe phænomena, it is at their birth, and not at their full growth of manhood, that they muſt be diſcovered.

THAT there are happy periods, which are creative of ſuch ſuperiority in nature, can ſcarce be denied; becauſe, generally more than one man receives the tincture of theſe excellencies at the ſame time, and a general exaltation of human faculties reigns at one æra in the ſame kingdom, more than at all others.

TO ſay then, that men have at all times been alike, is to ſay ſomething which experience proves to be untrue; but to aſſert that the whole

circles of two kingdoms, from their dawning greatneſs to their final diſſolutions, are much reſembling one another, is what approaches very nearly to veracity; the whole progreſs of two nations ranged ſide by ſide, reſemble one another in their parallel points, more than the ſame kingdom at two different times; an old Briton and an old Roman, had more reſemblance than Cincinnatus and Mark Anthony, or Sir Francis Drake and the late Admiral Mathews.

THE great care then, which ſhould be the purſuit of every miniſter, is to find proper objects for the ſoul of man, and preſerve that ſelf-conſciouſneſs of its own greatneſs, which is natural to men of the moſt exalted ſpirit.

NO miniſters have ſo manifeſtly miſtaken the ways of governing men, as the late miniſtry of this kingdom; one total ignorance of human nature, or deſign of ſubduing all hearts to the influence of money, has been the favourite ſcheme; and becauſe men have been purchaſed to do wrong, they have vainly imagined, that they

they might be bought to do right, which is in many caſes impoſſible.

THE ridicule which has been thrown upon patriotiſm, honor, integrity, and religion, have done more real miſchief in a political ſenſe, than millions of money, nay than any ſum can reſtore.

THE laughing theſe things out of countenance has debaſed the ſpirit of the nation; and too much reaſoning on every thing will have the ſame effect, I mean what is called reaſoning by the preſent half-thinkers of this iſland.

WHEN the ſacred notion, which is annexed to honor and theſe other qualities, are laughed away, there is an end to all true incentive amongſt men; and if ſoldiers of any kind are animated by any other motive beſides, it deſtroys the very idea of a ſoldier; there muſt be ſomething that has the air of romantic in the manners of that nation which attempts great actions, and ſucceeds.

IN the laſt war, the navy had all the captures given to them, which were taken by the reſpec-

reſpective captains; by this means honor was laid to ſleep, and many were broke for cowardice at the end of the war, who had gotten great riches during its continuation; the commander who was as active as Mercury, or any other thief, in catching merchant ſhips and prizes, was as lame as Vulcan in purſuing a man of war, and an acquiſition of honor.

THE nature of a ſoldier was by this means totally ſubverted, by placing his motive to action on wrong ſprings, in the human compoſition. There has never yet been a nation, who has greatly exalted itſelf by what is called ſuperior reaſon; ſome kind of enthuſiaſm has been the ſource of all great actions: ſelf-debating makes all purſuits cold and inanimate, and finds too little reality in any thing, to riſque much for the obtaining it; even country, wife, family and friends, are unequal to that production in a reaſoner.

THE Greeks owed more to the love of their country, which animated them to the ſervice of it, than to all their philoſophers and ſages; the Romans

Romans were fired to action by the ſame incentive.

WITH all that knowledge which Boullainvilliers has ſo liberally beſtowed on the Arabs, they would have reſted in their dry deſarts, without daring any thing of conſequence, a ſet of thieves and plunderers, if Mahomet had not inflamed their minds by views of paradiſe, to actions of immortal daring.

WHAT have we ſeen in almoſt our own times! the Dutch performing miracles to ſave themſelves and their moraſſes from the Spaniard, when public virtue in poverty urged them to action; and now they are overwhelmd in wealth, as private men, they would ſcarce move a finger to defend their county from invaſion, becauſe that public ſpirit is expired.

NOTHING then is ſo weak in a miniſter, as effacing the prevalency of thoſe ideas, and pretending to ſupply all by dint of money.

THEY may indeed bribe men to be aſſaſſins, informers, and deſtroyers of their country, by means

of the pernicious influence of gold; but to virtue, valour, and public good, it is ſcarce poſſible; there is ſomething repugnant in the nature of theſe things, to the accepting pecuniary rewards; a military order hanging at a button-hole, a rib-band croſſing a breaſt, the word *honor* even, can do more in the hands of a great man, than the millions which were ſquander'd the laſt war; with it every thing may be atchieved, and without it nothing.

I think, a government ſhould never ſuffer any diſquiſitions on the nature of ſuch things, or permit men to reaſon themſelves, as it is call'd, out of every virtue, into the purſuit of every vice; the faſhion of examining all things, is unrealizing every thing which is active in the human frame.

How eaſy is it to laugh a man out of what muſt give him fatigue and trouble, into an opinion of eaſe and ſafety; money is never won by pains; the ſoldier who mounts the breach has five-pence a day, and the change-alley Jew gets a thouſand pounds during that time; yet, the former, I preſume, is the ho-

neſter

neſter man, and defends the property of him who laughs at him for the folly of being ſhot at for five-pence a day, whilſt the latter is honored for his riches; a Jew who has plundered his country of a million, finds a kind reception by a miniſter, when a ſoldier, who has ſuſtain'd his country's honor at the loſs of his limbs, is denied admittance.

THE very value of money is as ideal as that of honor, and an American chief would deſpiſe gold, who would be piqued to any deſperate action by glory; a blue bead of glaſs, or a common mirror, will operate on them ſtronger than money, at leaſt it would till the natives of Europe ſeduced them from their original ſtate; and I believe, at preſent a belt of wampum, deliver'd by an Indian chief, binds them as truly to their words, as any treaty made amongſt chriſtian princes at the Pyrenean mountains, Utrecht, or Aix la Chapelle; they have affixed an idea of ſacred to theſe things, and farther than theſe ideas operate, no treaty can bind or oblige, in whatever manner it may be executed.

THIS

This nation, of all the others of Europe, has ſuffer'd the moſt by neglecting the influence which honor has amongſt them; the very nature of its conſtitution prevents it from being filled with numbers of perſons diſtinctly honored for their ſervice; here is no inferior order of knighthood, and a ſimple knight is to be found amongſt grocers, tobacconiſts, cheeſemongers, and other trades; which effaces its effects, and renders it below the conſideration of a man who has deſerved well of his country, either in arts, arms, or ſcience.

Too many honorary diſtinctions alſo, as the nation is of the mixed kind of government, would render that part which beſtows honors, too powerful; thoſe ſo diſtinguiſh'd would find an attachment to that alone, and the balance would preponderate on that ſide. In France the king is not divided from the country's intereſt, (the people of England think he poſſibly may); but univerſal honor, conſider'd as ſacred, would have a juſt and true influence on all; nothing diſcovers this ſo effectually as a regiment of ſoldiers, which has been once

eſteemed for ſome gallant action, the ſame ſpirit runs thro' it for generations, and the leaſt exalted man of the kingdom becomes animated with the gallant ſoul of the corps, in ſix months after he has been liſted amongſt them, and filled with a ſpirit of bravery, to which he was before a ſtranger; and yet, the pay of theſe men is no better than thoſe of other regiments, where no ſuch animating principle prevails: in the day of battle the honor of the regiment ſhall operate on their minds, ſtronger than untold ſums of gold; and this ſpirit grows by indulgence, whereas that ariſing from money is ruin'd by its reward.

THIS is the preſent fate of England; adieu,

I am your moſt obedient ſervant.

LET-

LETTER XLIX.

To the Reverend Father CURTIO MARINELLI *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IF multiplicity of printing is a proof of much learning, the ſtate of letters was never in ſo flouriſhing a condition as at preſent; and yet, notwithſtanding this, it really was never ſo truly the contrary, ſince the firſt riſe of learning in this iſland.

NAY, ſo true it is, tho' it may ſeem paradoxical, that even that art, which was the greateſt propagator of ſcience, is now the moſt likely to prove its deſtruction, and printing will probably become the greateſt enemy to letters.

TO produce works of ſcience, ſuppoſing that there are men of genius in a kingdom, literature muſt be held in honor, and careſſed; genius is as coy as a virgin, and will make no more advances to the company of the great, than

chaſtity in Suſanna did to the two elders: it feels its own ſuperiority, and generally being united with pride in the ſame breaſt, rather ſhuns, than officiouſly ſeeks the acquaintance of ſuperiors. This may be blamed with juſtice perhaps; and yet, ſuch is the nature of man, that a genius is as little affected by moralizing, as a dolt.

YET, though pride prevents their ſeeking ſuperior company, neceſſity obliges them to ſeek ſuſtenance. It has been my conſtant remark alſo, that lazineſs is almoſt the inſeparable companion of ſuperior parts; they deſpiſe what they diſcover with ſo much eaſe; and yet far from being humbled by it, they contemn ten times more thoſe who cannot ſee ſo much, and yet admire that little.

DOUBLY lazy from the eaſe of doing things, and the ill-judging opinion of thoſe who praiſe aukwardly, and ſhew by every remark that they have never conceived the author's deſign (for an eulogy miſplaced catches the heart of none but the weak) they ſeek the ſhorteſt way of getting the

the moſt money, and ſince they are not ſought by the great, neceſſarily become the hackneys of bookſellers.

REDUCED to this ſtage, genius is not the thing which is beſt paid for: abſtracts of authors already famous; compilements of compilements of all kinds; dictionaries in arts, ſcience, phyſic, trade, commerce, love, and raſcality; for, the ſcoundrel's dictionary has been lately printed in London, which I hope will compleat the work and taſte of it; are thoſe which have beſt rewarded the compilers.

ALL theſe things are ſure pay; the author's ſheet brings him his money, which he and his bookſeller have agreed for; he eats and reſts in peace, without the pain of thinking, when he has done his daily labour.

ON the contrary, if by the ſtricteſt application, a man ſhould have diſcovered any thing new in ſcience or art, advanced the welfare, health, or happineſs of mankind, perhaps he may, after ſeven years pains, be rewarded by a bookſeller

full

full as well, as if he had compiled the works of former authors, or tranſlated three whole months from the French.

HENCE it muſt happen that ſcience and literature muſt ſoon be quite diſgraced, being without honor and polite reception: the bookſellers not daring to print what may leſſen their former property in authors on the ſame ſubject, timid to engage in new works, and the writer in no ſtate to publiſh for himſelf (for it has been much the fate of genius, to be wedded to poverty in this kingdom) it follows, that literature muſt naturally fall into decay, and ſcience ſeems to be at a full ſtop.

ALL theſe dictionaries, and compilements in arts, are juſt well enough written to flatter the underſtandings of the ignorant, and amuſe with that moon-ſhine of knowledge, which gives juſt light enough to miſtake one animal for another, and impart one kind of deceitful colour to all objects.

IN truth, theſe abſtracts, and compiled works, ſeem to be contrived, to make every one who reads

reads them, underſtand nothing, and render the authors, from whence they were drawn, altogether unſtudied, and not underſtood: thus, letters will be probably deſtroyed by letters.

THESE are the preſent advantages, which are drawn from genius and printing; and in this manner it muſt remain, unleſs more men of rank, fortune, and nobility, will follow the noble example of the Earl of H—ſs, and give countenance to genius, when it appears in this country.

FROM this ſtate of things it muſt happen, that the French academies of belles lettres, and ſciences (the firſt of which is honorable without penſion) muſt at laſt conquer the genius of England in letters.

HONOR is the vital principle of every thing that is truly praiſe-worthy; the perſon who attempts a work with that view, will always endeavour to give it the utmoſt perfection he is able; the other to finiſh it as ſoon as poſſible, money being the reſearch of the latter, and eternal praiſe the object of the former.

To make literature thrive, and call forth the latent ſeeds of genius, academies of this kind ſhould be eſtabliſh'd, where productions in belles lettres might be read, and the opinion of the beſt judges taken, before the work is given to the world; this would impart luſtre to letters and weight to theperformance; and bookſellers might then ſeek writers, as the latter are obliged to ſeek them at preſent.

A generous reception at the tables of the great, as learned men are ſure of finding in Italy, would impart a more polite manner of conceiving, or at leaſt delivering ſentiments, than at preſent prevails in this kingdom.

The ladies, methinks, ſhould be as fond of preſiding in a circle of learning, as in a tumult of cards; and a ducheſs might draw as much honor from having the politeſt aſſembly of men of letters, as from that of the greateſt rout. I wiſh the time would come, when the females would univerſally make that manner a rule, and every lady's fame depend upon her reception and encouragement of the literati: this has prevail'd

in Italy and France, and one lady you know, the celebrated Laura Buſſi, has obtain'd a profeſſorſhip, and been made member of the academy at Bologna, which ſhe ſupports with honor, and has a chair in their aſſemblies deſtined for her alone.

To deſpiſe the underſtanding of women, is to loſe the grace of many kinds of writing, and ſometimes the matter; knowledge from the ſex, like diamonds from the hands of the lapidary, receiving its figure and brilliancy, tho' they do not create the gem. Adieu; I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER L.

To the Reverend Father BATISTA GUARINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IT is by nations, as by individuals, there is no more pretence to expect perfection from one, than the other; the moſt exalted people, like the moſt exalted underſtandings, have their foibles and vices, like thoſe who bear no rank in the nations of the earth; and tho' there may have been certain æras in which they ſeem to aſſume the nature of angels, there are others where they join that of the brute; it is the condition of a whole community, as well as of thoſe individuals which compoſe it.

NOTHING is more common than to ſee a man of ſuperior underſtanding duped, in the moſt common articles of life, where men of much leſs ſenſe would have eſcaped; the moſt prepoſterous and abſurd paſſions, the moſt ridi-

culous and ill-founded prejudices, poſſeſs minds, which if we ſaw no part of them but their ſuperior hours, we ſhould ſcarce credit the weakneſs into which they fall.

No nation is more replete with experiments of this kind, than this which I now live amongſt; indeed the inhabitants of the whole earth have the ſame ſeeds of foibles, but the plant does not thrive to the ſame degree, which is to be ſeen here; every thing commonly met with of that kind in England is a caracatura, compared with what is to be found in other kingdoms.

It ſeems to be the particular deſign of this government, as it is now adminiſtred, to let the minds and diſpoſitions of the inhabitants run wild, into all extremes which do not intermeddle in their maxims of ſtate.

There is one weakneſs which ſeems almoſt univerſal, which is, the unwillingneſs to allow any merit in the French productions of arts, ſcience, and literature; and tho' there are a thouſand inſtances, in which, many cuſtoms amongſt the French might be adopted with advantage,

in the encouraging arts, ſciences, learning and commerce; yet it is ſufficient that they are French, to inhibit their being introduced into this country.

A PERSON who gives the due praiſe which belongs to that nation, and to his own countrymen, is conſidered as little leſs than a rebel, and runs no ſmall riſque of receiving ſome diſpleaſing expreſſions; he will moſt certainly be ill thought of, and conſidered as a well-wiſher to the Gallic nation.

THE averſion to all which is the product of that people, is the reigning paſſion amongſt the number of this iſland; and many a uſeful purſuit has been quitted, becauſe it was originally French.

THIS diſpoſition is of much diſſervice to the national good, and this envy or hatred is for ever breaking out in companies, where any one ſpeaking in the favour of French manners, is generally conſidered as depreciating Engliſh; tho' the whole intent of that ſpeaker be, to have the ſame introduced into his own country, and make

it as perfect as poſſible: in truth, to ſpeak well of France, is the ſame as to ſpeak ill of England, and is generally received in that manner.

THIS taſte is notwithſtanding to be conſidered as general, rather than univerſal, and yet, it is perhaps, as univerſal as any cuſtom in the kingdom; the people of good ſenſe and knowledge of the nation, are not to be numbered amongſt them however.

IF you praiſe the Spaniſh honor, the Italian muſic, painting, ſculpture, and architecture, the German bravery, there is not the leaſt viſible jealouſy; an Engliſhman is the moſt ready creature to avow their ſuperiority, in theſe particulars; but if the French are mentioned in the like manner, there will be ten thouſand difficulties ſtarted, he will make a hundred evaſions to avoid acceding to that truth, which he cannot abſolutely deny; there is a kind of contempt for all that is French, and yet a baſe fear of their ſuperiority.

THIS has its influence in the ſtateſman alſo, and under the deluſive notion of the ſuperior bravery

bravery of Engliſhmen, they leave their kingdom unprovided with defence, preſuming that Engliſh peaſants who have never known the uſe of arms, becauſe they have never been truſted with them, can repell an invaſion from France, of a regular and well-diſciplined force.

THIS very neglect is a monſtrous expence to this kingdom; it renders a fleet of ſhips neceſſary to defend their coaſts in two or three places, which, after all, are ineffectual where the paſſage is ſo ſhort, if the beſt ſeamen are to be credited.

BY means of this, double the men of war become neceſſary for the Engliſh, that are for the kingdom of France; the laſt deſtine none to the defending their coaſts, and are at eaſe about the ill effects which any deſcent can cauſe, becauſe they confide in a militia well train'd in arms; the Engliſh dare not quit theirs, becauſe they have not land forces equal to repel an invaſion.

AN imitation of their neighbours in this reſpect would certainly be of infinite uſe, and

preſerve the nation from that ruin which threatens it, unleſs the miniſtry may hereafter prevent it, by ruining it themſelves: it is difficult to decide with what other view this infatuation, of neglecting all military diſcipline, can be ſuffered amongſt the common people.

In Paris, I obſerved a very different turn of thinking; it is the French faſhion to talk much of the ſuperior excellency of the Engliſh, in arms, ſcience, and learning; to ſo great a degree is that carried, that a gentleman has written a comedy, called the Anglomania; indeed it has never been preſented but privately, however, it is ſufficient to ſhew the preſent reigning diſpoſition of the Pariſians.

Nothing can recommend a thing at Paris, more than having it ſaid in its favour, that it is of Engliſh production; our ſilks are preferred to their own, and the royal family of France has been more than once cloathed in the manufactures of the Engliſh: a gentleman, who is imagined to underſtand theſe affairs well, has told me, that the ballance of trade between theſe two nations, illicit and permitted, is in favour of England;

in

in this however, I am a true catholic, and act on implicit faith.

THIS I am ſure of, that no ſcheme will be rejected at Paris, becauſe it comes from London, and none left unrewarded; becauſe I have known ſeveral that have been well received; tho' there is more than one in this kingdom, who having contrived uſeful machines, have yet never met reward or encouragement, and at preſent languiſh in obſcurity.

THAT England has once been the deſerved wonder of Europe, is certainly indiſputable; the fire has blazed extremely bright, and the fuel has been the ſooner conſumed; the preſent miniſtry, whoſe duty it is to continue that ſupply, are inattentive to the conſequence, and conſider it poſſible for the great particulars to be at eaſe and happy, without caring whether the people are or not.

THERE is ſcarce a motive to human actions, I mean a laudable one, which is not totally exhauſted; patriotiſm, or love of our country, is now ridiculed even in the little boroughs, and baniſhed

niſhed all polite company; religion has no longer intereſt ſufficient to create a diſpute in its favour; even Lord Bolingbroke's poſthumous works do not ſell. The minds of the profeſſed free-thinkers, are ſettled into a thorough conviction, that religion is a plauſible error, and at preſent are in no neceſſity of reading any thing to confirm them in that idea; and yet this ariſes from the inſufficiency of all kinds of ſubjects to move men to read them, and not from improved knowledge, or deeper thinking.

THE whole motive to action in this iſland is the enriching the individual, where every purſuit is lawful, which does not miſcarry; a man who has held conſiderable employments under the crown, to whom the diſtribution of tickets was entruſted in the laſt lottery, violated the law made on that account, in his own favour immediately, and yet he retains his places, and I hear of no puniſhment which he is like to undergo.

THE ſame is to be found in all poſſible ways where it is practicable; and yet theſe people ſtill believe that a nation can hold together,

where every part is corrupted; they might as well expect this of a human body, and it would be as true; the cauſe is hid from common eyes, and others are regardleſs of the event. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant,

LETTER LI.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO BONINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

DURING the time I tarried in Paris, I could never perceive that the French muſic was ever adapted to the words which accompanied them; no paſſion whether love or hatred, anger or deſpair, were attended with thoſe ſounds, which are uttered by thoſe who are under the influence of either of theſe paſſions.

THE lover, but for his action, in his tender paſſages, would to my hearing have been indiſtinguiſhable from thoſe in his rage; the muſic ſeem'd as well adapted for the expreſſing one ſenſation as the other in each circumſtance; this made the French opera a moſt diſpleaſing entertainment to my ears, eſpecially when every thing was accompanied with a ſquawl, which is as much out of tune, as the crying of cats, or a pig leading to the ſlaughter.

NOTWITH-

NOTWITHSTANDING this, to the ſenſe of ſeeing, an opera in France is an agreeable amuſement; even the chorus of ſingers, which made my ears thrill with horror, offered an agreeable entertainment to my eyes, and in ſome meaſure abated the diſtreſs of hearing; and tho' Jelliot gave me pain in his ſinging, yet Duprés charmed me with his graceful attitudes in dancing; the eye is exquiſite, and the ear almoſt void of diſtinction in the natives of France. Yet it muſt be acknowledged, that the little *chanſons à boire*, and gay ſonnets, are ſet naturally and well, and all the others inſufferable; theſe are innate to every French creature.

PERHAPS the French language, which ſeems but badly adapted for poetry, is not capable of being ſet to muſic, in parts which expreſs the pathetic or any other paſſion; and the ſame fault has crept into the ſounds which form their language, thro' want of accuracy in the organs of hearing, that has into their muſic from the ſame cauſe.

METHINKS,

METHINKS Voltaire writes much better in proſe, than poetry; and no poet, Rouſſeau excepted, amongſt this nation, has ſucceeded ſo well in verſe as in proſe; the language is abſolutely repugnant to the meaſures and ſweetneſs of true verſification; yet it becomes proſe extremely well in moſt kinds of writing, particularly the narrative, airy, and trifling, in which it excells all languages that I underſtand.

THE language of Great Britain is well adapted for poetry; it has a ſtrength which is not to be found in the French, and a variety which is wanting in the Italian, from that kind of monotony which attends our words being terminated in vowels.

INDEED, after having lived long amongſt theſe ſounds, I am inclined to think, that no language is better form'd for being well put to muſic than the Engliſh; and Mr. Handel, and others of their own compoſers, have ſhewn, that this obſervation is true beyond contradiction; a thing which I never could perceive in the French compoſitions.

YET

YET, this does not ſeem to have much influenced the opinion of the inhabitants of this iſland; a few women, and a few men, who are judges of harmony, for the ſame reaſon that birds are of pneumatics, becauſe one has fled thro' Italian muſic, as the others have thro' the air, determine all in favour of Italy, and a caſtrato is the only ſinger, and Italian the only melody on earth.

To ſuch a degree is this carried, that in complaiſance to the moſt miſerable ſet of Italian ſingers that ever accompanied any inſtrument above a ſalt-box, or a Jews harp, an Engliſh opera, compoſed by an Engliſh muſician, was prohibited being preſented; and the living language of a country, capable of equal graces with the Italian, well ſet to muſic, which was univerſally underſtood, has been poſtponed in preference to bad voices, unknown language, old ſcenes, and dirty cloaths. This is encouraging foreigners in a true ſenſe, and outdoing the good Samaritan, who, tho' he poured wine and oil into the wounds of a ſtranger, did not preſume

to

to ſtarve the natives of his own country; this then is the land of true hoſpitality.

IT is a true obſervation of the Engliſh, that they love their country, and are not much attach'd to loving one another; and that the Scotch love not their country, but are very warm in affection for their countrymen; and yet the Engliſhman ſhall continually exclaim againſt England, and never quit it for another place; and the Scot harangue in the praiſe of his native land, and never wiſh to return to it.

METHINKS, the language which is moſt capable of being ſet to thoſe ſounds which accompany ſenſations of the ſoul, ſhould be the beſt; and as the inhabitants of this earth, whether white, brown, or black, expreſs their feelings by much the ſame tone of voice in joy or ſorrow, fear, hope, anger, or love; it is a moſt amazing thing, how the ſounds which expreſs thoſe ideas ſhould in themſelves be ſo different, and that words which have no affinity in ſound, ſhould expreſs the ſame idea, as ἔρως, *amor*, *love*, in Greek, Latin, and Engliſh, or how that feeling, which ſeems to be one in all the

different

different breaſts of an Athenian, Roman, and Briton, ſhould prompt the organs of ſpeech, to ſuch different pronunciations.

THIS to me appears more difficult to be explained, than the origin of language itſelf; whoever obſerves on what paſſes in the human mind, muſt have remarked, that every object of the ſenſes, as naturally prompts us to ſpeak of it, as to attend to it.

THE excellence or ſingularity of any object will urge us to expreſs it by ſome ſound, as will novelty, and ten thouſand other circumſtances; beſides, there is a certain, tho' perhaps inexplicable connection between the organs of ſpeech, and thoſe of the ſenſes. Who can hear an exquiſite performer in muſic, behold a finiſhed piece of painting, taſte a delicious fruit, or ſmell an enlivening odor, without being preſt by the excellency of each to an exclamation in their praiſe; and this as well alone as in company?

BUT that the natives of one ſide of a river ſhould call the ſame objects by different names,

from thoſe of the other, or a ridge of mountains change the ſounds of a whole language, of beings of the ſame kind, is a moſt ſingular phænomenon to my manner of conceiving things.

PRAY tell me, what account can be given for this; or whether any account can be given or no?

Is it poſſible, that the ſouls of creatures, ſo much alike in form, can be ſo different in their ſenſations, and the word *odium* in Latin, ſignify the ſame with that which is meant by *hate* in Engliſh?

IF this ſhould be received as a truth, it would make the writings of one nation, tho' the language be tranſlated, unintelligible to another; the ideas in each continuing different, tho' the words are truly changed for each other; thus, *to love* in Engliſh, is *amare* in our language, and *to hate*, *odiare*; and yet, if the ſenſations which attend theſe words are as different as the ſounds, it muſt be evident that the writers in theſe two different tongues muſt be unintelligible to each other, according to the original meaning, tho' juſtly tranſlated.

THE word *odiare*, tranſlated into this *to hate*, conveys to the Engliſhman's mind that idea which belongs to the Engliſh word, and not the Italians, and ſo in the inverſe: from this, if the difference of ſenſation is equal to that of the ſound, theſe languages tranſlated convey very different ideas from the writer's deſign.

SOMETHING like this is true, but there is not all the difference in the ſenſe of theſe words, which there is in the ſounds.

LET us ſuppoſe, that all the ideas of ſenſation, from paſſion, and other intereſting emotions, in the breaſts of the inhabitants, are actually as different as the ſounds of each nation; yet, this would only help us in that alone, and the objects of our ſenſes, colours, odours, and others, would ſtill remain inſolveable, by this manner. Surely, men do not ſee things ſo very different to make the ſame object known by *il bianco* in one language, and *white* in another, as in Italian and Engliſh.

THERE is then ſomething more than has yet been diſcovered, which is the cauſe of this

variety of language, in nations ſeparated from one another by ſuch little diviſions as rivers or even a ridge of hills.

PRAY tell me then, how to ſolve this difficult phænomenon, and pleaſe myſelf and others, who would gladly be acquainted with an explication of it. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LET-

LETTER LII.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO PAMPTA *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

WHATEVER my obſervations contribute to your pleaſure, they anſwer ſomething more than I expect, and all that I deſire; you ſeem pleaſed with my laſt, and wiſh me to explain what I appealed to your judgment for a ſolution of: this is drawing water from a ſcanty well, when whole rivers run before your gate.

INDEED, I am yet at a loſs to ſatisfy myſelf, whence it happens that brutes ſpeaking univerſally the ſame language intelligible to one another, that men on this ſide the channel, and of the other, ſhould yet not underſtand each others expreſſions.

A FRENCH cock is well underſtood by an Engliſh; and the ſounds with which a hen calls her

her young, tho' uttered by a Spaniſh hen, would ſtill be underſtood by chickens hatched under an Engliſh.

An Arabian barb, and an Engliſh ſtallion, ſpeak the ſame language; their defiances and other ſounds are truly underſtood by one the other, tho' the firſt was bred on the plains of Mecca, and the latter on the meadows of the ſilver Thames; the ſame is true in the language of dogs, and other quadrupeds.

From this one would be led to conceive, that brutes were better adapted to their ſtate, than the beings of human kind, in this proviſion of a language univerſally underſtood, and man not the favourite animal of its creator.

The reaſon, Sir, of the univerſality of one, and the diverſity of others, may be underſtood and perhaps find ſome explanation, tho' the cauſe may not; that is, we may probably ſee the final cauſe at leaſt, tho' we never diſcover the efficient.

It has been a long lamentation amongſt the learned, that all books of literature, and ſcience,

ſcience, have not been written in one language, or in other words, that there ſhould be more than one language ſpoken in the world.

THIS they imagine would have ſhortened the way to knowledge, and rendered arts, ſciences and letters much ſooner attained, and much farther extended, without the loſt time of learning words, and their ſignification; the application which is now given to one would have been deſtined to the other, and acquiring knowledge taken place of ſtudying ſounds.

THIS ſeems extremely probable to a haſty view, which only looks on the coaſts, and delineates the ſhoars of learning, without travelling into the interior parts of it, to diſcover the true nature of its ſoil, inhabitants, and productions.

WILL not the very contrary of this appear to be true? and, conſidering the nature of man, will not the different languages have given riſe to the revival and propagation of letters in all countries, where they have flouriſhed.

WHATEVER ſeems to be ſecreted from the knowledge of man, is the purſuit which is followed with the utmoſt avidity by the mind; we love to penetrate beyond what is the common force of nature, and excell the reſt of that ſpecies of which we make a part: this would not ſo much have influenced where one language had been open to all.

IF we conſider what are the effects of novelty, that incentive would have been extinguiſhed, had knowledge been continued in one language. The ancient writings of the Greeks and Latins, at the revival of learning, came with all the charm of being new, becauſe they had been ſo long unknown; and even with a different joy, that of reverence for antiquity, which perhaps in many inſtances, has carried the character of men above that ſtation which they poſſeſs in the realms of Parnaſſus: a continuation of the ſame language would probably have made all men looſe in their purſuits, and obliterated the very traces of learning; ſciences would have burnt out like a taper, and have been no more relumined.

WHEREAS

WHEREAS the deſire of knowing ſomething which others do not, puſhes men to the acquiring language, and the knowledge which it contains, and the long lying unknown, imparts a delight to the re-appearance, like the budding trees, and flowery vegetables in ſpring, after a long winter.

THO' this ſhould not pleaſe you, which I have already ſaid, methinks this may obtain a better fate, which I am about to ſay; it is, that diſcoveries, in whatever language they are written, are underſtood perhaps by thouſands, and perhaps not by one in a thouſand; it is ſcarce poſſible to know, whether an author be truly underſtood by a reader, unleſs he can proceed one ſtep farther than the writer: if he does not accompliſh this, how can we be ſure he has gone the whole length, or underſtood all that which is already written.

MEN who have conceived new thoughts, and been born with real genius, would have been excellent tho' no one had written before them; and diſcoveries of any kind can have been

but little advanced by thoſe who have gone wrong, unleſs it may be in keeping ſucceeding authors from treading the ſame road.

No author has a title to greater honor than he deſerves, and the man who advances two ſteps beyond what is eſteem'd already extraordinary, merits the higheſt praiſe, and national reward; but this is not yet the ſole reaſon of variety of tongues being ſpread over the globe; this diverſity of language is yet a ſtronger boundary than mountains, ſeas, and rivers; had one language been intelligible to all, the common people of the earth would have been alike, and the cuſtoms of other lands known to them, without reading, from common converſation, which are now for ever hid in obſcurity on the account of that deficiency.

If Engliſh had been the univerſal language, for example, would the Pole and Bohemian have lived as ſlaves, and been ſold like cattle with the land to a new lord? they would certainly have fought new kingdoms, and, being alike intelligible every where, have travelled the round world to fly ſlavery, becauſe their language would

would have ſerved them equally as well in all parts, as in their native land. *Methinks* one uniformity of cuſtoms would have been the inevitable conſequence of one language, univerſally underſtood.

BUT as it is, the different languages are almoſt an invincible bar to the poor people, who would deſert their native country; they have no power of explaining what they would have, or do, and are conſequently held at home, in ſpite of all inclination to be free; the difficulty is too great to be attempted, in their preſent embarraſſment.

A GENERAL language would make people travel into another kingdom, as *little reluctant*, as at preſent they do into another province of the ſame realm; and national attachment would have been long loſt, if one language had been ſpoken by all the nations of the globe.

WHO then would have frozen beneath the north pole, or in the ſnowy hills of Lapland, thro' a tedious night of ſix months? or parched

on

on the dry deſart of Arabia, unſheltered from the ſultry ſky?

THREE parts of the globe had been a deſart, had one language been univerſally ſpoken, and others too crowded with inhabitants.

THIS ſeems to be a probability well founded in nature, when we ſee how eaſily men, who ſpeak various languages, loſe their natural prejudice, and are diſpoſed to be indifferent whether they breathe the air of England, Italy, or France; and with how little reluctance, great numbers of Germans leave their native lands for thoſe of America, where they know that their native language is very readily ſpoken, by former ſettlers.

THE cuſtoms of France and England reſemble each other more and more every day, and more than any other two people in Europe; as that language is more known by the Engliſh, than by other people, they have long followed French cuſtoms; and the French ſince the introducing the ſtudy of the language of this kingdom in Paris, are following the Engliſh in their

their turn; as theſe increaſe, the people will become ſtill more reſembling, till the difference be ſcarce perceptible, and all diſtinction loſt, like the force of two oppoſite currents becoming one by the prevalency of the ſtrongeſt, or blue and yellow falling into one uniform colour of green. It is impoſſible but that an univerſal language would have effected an univerſal ſameneſs of behaviour and cuſtoms, long before this, by the vaſt intercourſe which the chriſtian religion and commerce, have made amongſt men.

To this variety of tongues it is owing, that the Laplander thinks happineſs no where to be found, but on the other ſide the artic circle, and prefers his whale oil to the juice of the Burgundian grape; and the Arabian die unrepining, in a land which denies him even water, to ſlake that thirſt which it creates; this is the boundary which preſerves the different climates of the earth inhabited, and ſcatters the human being uncomplaining, amidſt ſuns, and ſnows, on ſands and mountains, inſufferable to men brought forth in happier climes.

THIS then, ſeems to be the great uſe and final cauſe, of various language: the world would have been made in vain, if three parts had been left unpeopled, and contentment found no where in man, but in the few ſelected and paradiſaic ſpots of this vaſt globe; eternal feuds and miſery to man had been the conſequence, and mountains, rivers, ſeas, ſeparated kingdoms ineffectually.

I HAVE probably tired you by this time, in this reſearch. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LET-

LETTER LIII.

To the Marchioneſs of ***** *at* Rome.

Madam,

IT is not an eaſy thing to reſolve the queſtion which you aſk me; the ladies of *England* do and do not paint; that is, there are many who exclaim with great acrimony againſt that villainous cuſtom, whilſt the rouge is bluſhing on their cheeks; probably there are not three women in the kingdom who would openly avow it, as the ladies of Paris do without the leaſt heſitation. From this preſent ſhyneſs in the affair, it is only uſed as an art to help nature at a dead lift, after nocturnal riots, and the emotions of thoſe gentle paſſions, which attend a run of ill luck at cards; at which time the huſband is ſure of having a double potion of her choiceſt ſpirit of gall, and her face a double quantity of enlivening red.

THIS faſhion will probably gain ground in this kingdom, as that kind of life which makes it

it neceſſary, is in a very thriving way, and a ducheſs will very ſoon be diſtinguiſhed by her complexion, as eaſily as an inn-keeper's wife, or by the coronet on her coach, till the face becomes one entire red, ſpreading like the colour on the nectarine, and growing higher by more ſunſhine and time; or like the light of the moon beginning on one edge, extend till it covers the whole orb.

THE ladies of England do not underſtand the art of decorating their perſons, ſo well as thoſe of Italy; they generally increaſe the volume of the head by a cap, which makes it much bigger than nature, a fault which ſhould be always avoided in adorning that part.

FEMALES as ſquare at the ſhoulders as the ſtatue of the Farneſian Hercules, not long ſince covered the whole boſom, with a great white handkerchief ſpreading over the ſhoulders, which gave that part the air of a new kettle-drum; and this becauſe a celebrated beauty, tall and ſlender, appeared well in it, and gave it the name of a vandyke: we frequently ſee the hoop which is too big for a lady of ſix foot high, tied on about the waiſt of a woman of four; by

four, by which means ſhe has reduced the diameter to be twice as long as the perpendicular height, and all proportion deſtroyed; a full dreſt woman takes up as much breadth as is to be found in many ſtreets, and will with difficulty paſs through the old triumphal arch of Titus, without bruſhing the ſides.

THEY wear their petticoats too ſhort behind, and not imitating the moſt graceful birds, as the ladies of Italy and France, in a trail of their robes upon the ground, loſe the greateſt grace which dreſs can impart to a female.

NOTHING is ſo various as the habits of Engliſh ladies and gentlemen, the waxing, waning moon, is no ſimile for their changing; they not only vary the colours and deſigns of their ſilks and velvets, as the French do every year, but the garb is cut different in every month, from the great to the little cap, from the long to the ſhort ſleeve, ſo that the head ſhall be loſt this month in a cloud of white linnen, and the next as bare as the ſhorn pate of a capuchin; in like manner the hair itſelf, from the antique plat, which gives grace to the

head-dreſs, when the hair is abundant, and looks like rats tails when in ſmall quantity, to the looſe ringlet which adorns the ſwan-white neck, or the cropt locks which look like a horſe's main newly cut, or a hedg-hog in wrath, are never adapted to the heads which ſhould wear them.

In truth, not beauty but novelty governs in London, not taſte but copy; a celebrated woman of five foot ſix inches gives law to the dreſs of thoſe who are but four foot two; and a ſlender ſhape and eaſy air aſſigns the ſize of the ſtays for the fatteſt women in the kingdom.

Thus, nothing is ſo common, as to hear the ladies of this nation aſſure you, that ſuch a ſhape is quite out of faſhion, and the preſent reigning mode is the ſlender or large, as if the creative power, like the hands of mantua-makers, had cut the human perſon by a new pattern, and thrown away the old; or mended its hand by practice.

Owing to this love of novelty it is, that if a lady of noted beauty in her face has a large waſte, every woman in ſix days is imitating

imitating her where ſhe can: tho', the features be the great charm, the ſhape is only imitable by art, and a lady, of a ſpan girt is ſtarving with cold, in ſtays that you can hardly graſp with one arm, loſt like a dwarf in a giant's coat of mail; in like manner, if a beauteous face be attended with a very ſlender ſhape, every plump woman in town muſt be reduced in her ſize, and preſt into a machine of whalebone ſo tight, that like flies, they appear to be ſcarce joined in the middle, they wriggle and twiſt like a loaded horſe with a galled back, and martyrs to the mode, curſing it internally, perſiſt in diachylon plaſter and tight ſtays.

THIS is not the caſe in Italy and France; the ladies know that the grace which attends plumpneſs, is unbecoming the ſlender; and the tall lady never affects to look like a fairy, nor the dwarf like the gianteſs, but each ſtudying the air and mein which become her figure, appears in the moſt engaging dreſs that can be made, to ſet off her perſon to the greateſt advantage.

THE ſack, which gives the greateſt grace to the female ſhape, is almoſt out of faſhion in

England; they are returned to the old Gothic way of many breaks and diviſions; whereas, the head neatly dreſt with a ribband, and the robe flowing from the ſhoulders on the ground behind, gives a regular pyramidal air, the moſt ornamental that a whole human figure can take, that is dreſt, and choſen by painters as much as poſſible.

I HAVE often imagined, that a lady in her dreſs ſhould reſemble a bird, and the genteeleſt woman imitate a peacock, the fineſt of all birds, letting her robes end in a long train behind; whilſt the head might be decorated with ſome little kind of coronet like that animal; for in truth, feathers are cloaths, and the great grace of this bird conſiſts in its plumage.

BUT as there are amongſt women all kinds of ſhapes, as amongſt feathered animals; ſo every lady ſhould ſtudy her reſemblance, in that genus of creatures which ſhe reſembles; and tho' you, madam, ought to imitate the pea-hen, and be the queen of the creation, yet other ladies, accommodating themſelves to their ſimilar forms, might reſemble the duck, goose, pullet, or turkey;

key; and thus be ſomething, in their habits, like thoſe animals which are dreſt by nature.

FROM how much ridicule would a regulation in theſe things preſerve the women of this country! at preſent you ſee the lady who is gracefully formed like the pea-hen, walking in the public gardens with the bob-tail of the duck, and the gooſe-like dame waddling with the unnatural long train, which follows ſo gracefully behind the majeſtic march of the peacock.

THIS is yet a further proof, that the ſenſe of beauty is not the prevailing taſte of the Engliſh; if it was, ſuch unbecoming and ſhifting faſhions could never take place amongſt them; their milliners dreſs them like no creatures of God's creation; and after having tarried two months in ſome little country-town, and exerciſed their invention in making caps, ruffles, and mantlets; they all return to London piping hot, and, amuſing their cuſtomers with a Paris-voyage, chriſten this cap with the name of Pompadour; that handkerchief, Orleans; this mantlet, Conti, or any great name; ſometimes

they borrow words from the religious orders, and call them Capuchins or Cordiliers, and thus ſpread univerſal diſgrace on the taſte of France, which has never beheld ſuch frightful dreſſes ſince the days of Hugh Capel.

HAPPY woman that gets the firſt cap of a new cut, and proves, that the imitators in dreſs, like thoſe in poetry, have more ſervility than genius, and are ignorant of their own proper force.

SUPPOSE, Madam, I get a ſubſcription from the ladies of this nation, to ſend an ambaſſadreſs to implore your preſence in theſe realms, to preſide over the government in faſhions.

You may be ſtiled the ſecretary of modes and graces, and have as much honor, and as many places to beſtow on your favourites as a ſecretary of ſtate, all to females. I am convinced you would bring your diviſion in adminiſtration to greater exactneſs than it is in the government, and not running in debt, reduce yourſelf to the patching an old coat with a new piece,

piece, becauſe you have not money enough to buy a new one.

IT is as certainly true in governments and nations, as in old cloaths and new wine; that the firſt is ſpoiled by patching, and the latter loſt by being too ſoon ſhut up: The firſt ſpeaks the ſyſtem of leaving things unattended to ſo long, that they can ſcarce be repaired by a new piece of expedient, and the precipitation of corking up ſchemes before they have ſufficiently fermented, is ſignified by the latter; by which it comes to paſs, that the poor old coat of England is become more rent by theſe new pieces; and the money, ſuddenly raiſed, as ſuddenly diſſipated by ineffectual exploſions in the application.

PRAY Madam, forgive this manner of finiſhing my letter in politics, which differs from its firſt ſetting out as much as the diſſertation written by a Biſhop of Ireland on tar-water, which beginning with tar, ends, I think with predeſtination, or ſomething as far from the original; yet he calls it a chain of reaſoning. I am,

Madam,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER LIV.

To the Counteſs of **** *at* Rome.

Madam,

AMONGST the many works of literature, in which this nation and the French are rivals; that of theatrical entertainments has been as much controverted as any whatever: each in its turn has aſſerted the ſuperiority of its writers above the other.

SHAKESPEARE by the Engliſh, and Corneille by the French, are cited as proofs of the ſuperiority of Engliſh and French genius, and each advocate equally hardy in ſuſtaining the glory of his nation.

YET, Madam, after as candid and impartial a diſquiſition of that which conſtitutes genius, as I am capable of making, I frankly confeſs, to me it appears, that Shakeſpeare was the more exalted being, in all that conſtitutes true ſuperi-

ority of ſoul. Regularity of plan, in dramatic performances, is the work of art; conception of character, and their ſupport thro' a whole theatric piece, the child of genius. Many men, nay all the French writers in tragedy, have reduced their productions for the ſtage, to the rules of the drama; yet, how few of them, or of any nation, have exalted and finiſhed the ideas of perſonage in their pieces, to any degree of ſublimity, and perfection.

FROM this difference we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that the power of conceiving and preſerving juſt characters in writing, is more rarely found, than that of planning a play; rules can teach one, which can effectuate nothing in the other; and many men may deſign, what not one in a million can execute.

FROM this, muſt it not be concluded, that if Shakeſpeare exceeded the French writers in conceiving, and juſtly ſuſtaining characters in tragedy, that he was of a ſuperior genius to the greateſt of the French nation?

THIS, you, madam, who underſtand both languages, ſhall decide; but permit me to point out

out ſuch characters as have never been conceived by any French tragic writer, conducted and ſuſtained in a manner which no other nation has ever ſeen, ancient or modern.

In the tragedy of Othello, the Moor all artleſs, open, and brave, is ſeduced by the wiles and ſubtilty of the hypocritic Jago.

The ſeeming ſimplicity of an honeſt heart is ſo exquiſitely ſupported, and practiſed by him on the unſuſpecting diſpoſition of a virtuous, valiant, and ingenuous mind, that no inſtance is to be produced of any thing parallel in any theatrical production.

In each of theſe characters there is not one miſtaken deviation; every ſpectator excuſes the Moor in his being deceived, and pities with ſincereſt ſorrow the fate of open honeſty, ſeduced by artifice and wiles.

The difficulty is not eaſily imagined, which attends the preſervation of theſe two characters. The Moor muſt be ſupported as brave, ſenſible, and honeſt; the ſkill lay in preſerving all theſe

theſe from the imputation of weakneſs in Othello, thro' the conducting the impoſition which was to be play'd upon him.

THE ſimple, plain, and ſeemingly artleſs cunning of Jago, was attended with no leſs difficulty, to preſerve the ſeparate characteriſtics of this perſonage, without deviating into one inſtance, which might betray his deſign to a man of ſenſe, is of all things the moſt difficult.

YET, thro' the whole conduct of both characters, there appears no one violation of the intended and original deſign of the poet.

IN this conſiſtency of character, the ſuperiority of the Engliſh poet appears above all others, unleſs the critics devoted to the Greek, and antiquity, ſhould conteſt it in favour of Homer; you, madam, will allow, that the great Corneille affords no inſtance of this nature, comparable to the Engliſh author.

HIS management of Caſſio, and Roderigo, is in the ſame ſimple, natural, and apparent honeſt ſtrain; we ſee that the deceit muſt be inviſible to ſuch men. The ſcene in the third act, between

Othello

Othello and Jago, where the latter firſt inſinuates the idea of jealouſy into the mind of the Moor, that timidity of accuſing the innocent, that regard for the reputation of Deſdemona, with the inſinuation againſt her fidelity, are ſo artfully mixt, that it is impoſſible, but that Othello muſt have been inſnared by his manner of conducting the converſation; how inimitable is his pretended love for Othello, his conjuring up the Moor's reſolution to know his ſentiments, by diſtant hints and ſuggeſtions, and when Othello breaks out,

I'll know thy thoughts,

he anſwers,

You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor ſhall not, whilſt 'tis in my cuſtody.

At this ſeemingly determined ſecrecy, the Moor pronouncing "ha!" Jago with all poſſible art cries out,

Oh! beware my lord, of jealouſy;
It is a green-eyed monſter, which doth mock
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in
bliſs
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger:
But

But oh! what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who doats yet doubts, ſuſpects yet ſtrongly
loves?

THIS ſpeech neceſſarily turns the thoughts of Othello on the idea of jealouſy, with all the appearance of nature, and refined art; and then by proceeding in the ſame manner, he leads him to examine the conduct of Deſdemona, and creates a ſuſpicion of her infidelity to the Moor, from her having choſen him, and refuſed thoſe

Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,

FROM this he draws an inference which reflects on the character of Deſdemona; this almoſt convinces the Moor of her being falſe to his bed, and he deſires Jago to ſet his wife to watch Deſdemona. In anſwer to this, the ſubtle villain pretends to intreat Othello to think no more of what he had told him, to attempt diſcovering Deſdemona's true diſpoſition, by the vehemence of her ſuit to him for reſtoring Caſſio, and to believe his fears for his honour had been too importunate in the affair; with this he leaves him. In all this ſcene there appears nothing

thing which can diſcover the Moor weaker than an honeſt, plain, brave man may be allowed to be; not one ſtep carried beyond the truth in nature, by Jago.

THE knowledge of the promptneſs of jealouſy in the boſom of man, which the author ſhews in the character of Jago, is beyond all compariſon; when he has poſſeſt the handkerchief which Deſdemona drops, he ſays,

I will in Caſſio's lodgings loſe this napkin,
And let him find it. Trifles light as air
Are to the jealous confirmations ſtrong
As proofs of holy writ. This may do ſomething.

The Moor already changes with my poiſons:
Dangerous conceits are in their nature poiſons,
Which at the firſt are ſcarce found to diſtaſte;
But, with a little act upon the blood,
Burn like the mines of ſulphur.

At ſeeing Othello enter, he continues;

Look where he comes! not poppy nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowſy ſyrups of the world,
Shall

Shall ever medicine thee to that ſweet ſleep
Which thou hadſt yeſterday.

THE operations which the jealous mind undergoes, were never ſo truly deſcribed by any author; the trifles light as air, the taſteleſs poiſon of a hint becoming mines of burning ſulphur to the ſoul, and the irrevocable power of ſweet ſlumber to a mind haunted with jealouſy, are beyond all conception juſt, great and ſublime, and I think to be found in no other author.

THE Moor enters with a conviction of the truth of what Jago had ſaid in the above ſoliloquy; his mind now burning with ſuſpicion, lighted up from thoſe ſparks which Jago had thrown upon it, without ſeeing him, he ſays,

Ha! falſe to me.

to which Jago replies,

Why, how now, general? no more of that,

Oth. Avant! begone! thou'ſt ſet me on the rack.
I ſwear 'tis better to be much abuſed
Than but to know a little.

THIS

THIS anſwer ſhews that the revealing this infidelity of Deſdemona, had made Jago inſufferable to his eyes; the combat between the violation of his bed, and the love of Deſdemona, working ſtrongly in him, he therefore ſwears 'tis better to be much abuſed in ſecret, than not to know what may be avowed to be ſufficient to vindicate the vengeance which an injured man ſhould take upon the author of his diſhonour. At this Jago, fearing leſt he ſhould retreat from the degree to which he had brought him, delay the purſuit, and relapſe to love, cries

How, my lord!

Othello anſwers,

What ſenſe had I of her ſtol'n hours of luſt?
I ſaw't not, thought it not, it harm'd not me;
I ſlept the next night well; was free and merry:
I found not Caſſio's kiſſes on her lips:
He that is robb'd, not wanting what is ſtol'n,
Let him not know't, and he's not robb'd at all."

IN this ſpeech, the whole bent of his mind is turned on the miſchief and diſquiet which Jago's

Jago's diſcovery had brought upon his ſoul; without his revealing it he had been happy, untouched by pangs of injury. Jago's anſwer is,

I am ſorry to hear this.

Othello proceeds ſtill in the ſame ſentiment, exclaiming

I had been happy if the general camp
(Pioneers and all) had taſted her ſweet body,
So I had nothing known. Oh now, for ever
Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content;
Farewell the plumed troops, and the big war,
That make ambition virtue! Oh! farewell,
Farewell the neighing ſteed, and the ſhrill trump,
The ſpirit-ſtirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumſtance of glorious war.
And oh! you mortal engines, whoſe rude throats
Th' immortal Jove's dread clamours counter-feit,
Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!

These reflections bring back on his ſoul, like the returning tide, the wretched change of

ſituation which Jago's diſcovery had produced in him; upon which Jago aſks,

Is't poſſible, my Lord?

OTHELLO, ſtill improving the former ſentiment, and feeling his fallen ſtate with infinite ſenſibility, flies impetuouſly into rage, and ſeizing Jago, cries,

Villain, be ſure thou prove my love a whore;
Be ſure of it; give me the ocular proof;
Or, by the worth of mine eternal ſoul,
Thou hadſt been better have been born a dog
Than anſwer my wak'd wrath.

When proceeding in the ſame paſſionate manner, Jago anſwers,

Oh grace! oh heaven defend me!
Are you a man? have you a ſoul? or ſenſe?
God be w' you; take mine office. O wretched fool,
That liv'ſt to make thine honeſty a vice!
Oh monſtrous world! take note, take note, oh world!
To be direct and honeſt is not ſafe.
I thank you for this profit; and from hence
I'll love no friend, ſith love breeds ſuch offence.

THIS

THIS ſpeech contains as much art, as ever entered into the conception of human nature. He firſt appeals to Othello's humanity and underſtanding; then at that inſtant, as intending to leave him, he ſays "God be with you," and throws up his commiſſion; he then exclaims at his own folly that has thus converted his honeſty into vice; when throwing a ſarcaſtic reflexion on the world, and thanking Othello for this information of what is to be expected from man, he determines to renounce all love for human nature. What ideas are there to be imagined, which can be thrown together with more judgment, and propriety, to reclaim Othello from that outrage which he has committed?

IT has its proper effect; the mind of man, ſtrongly agitated between two paſſions, ſuddenly veers from one to the other, like the uncertain blowings of a ſtorm; in conſequence of which, Othello comes about to believe that Jago is honeſt, and ſays,

Nay ſtay—thou ſhould'ſt be honeſt.

Jago, who perceives this approaching change, anſwers,

I ſhould be wiſe, for honeſty's a fool,
And loſes what it works for.

After this, Othello, reduced to the æquipoiſe between the love of his Deſdemona, and the truth of Jago's ſtory, cries out,

By the world,
I think my wife is honeſt, and think ſhe is not:
I think that thou art juſt, and think thou art not.
I'll have ſome proof.

This ſuſpence Jago ſeizes, to fix him in the firm opinion of her being falſe to his bed; when Othello ſays,

Give me a living reaſon ſhe's diſloyal.

At this Jago recounts what Caſſio ſaid in a dream, and wins upon the mind of the Moor entirely; at which he cries,

I'll tear her all to pieces——

Jago, not content with this, moſt artfully mentions to him the handkerchief in the hands of Caſſio, which he had formerly given to Deſdemona: this rivets him in the belief of his being diſhonored by Caſſio; at which he exclaims,

Oh that the ſlave had forty thouſand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I ſee 'tis true.——Look here, Jago,
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
'Tis gone ———
Ariſe black vengeance from the hollow hell;
Yield up, oh love! thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous heat! ſwell boſom, with thy fraught,
For 'tis of Aſpic's tongues.

Jag. Yet be content.

Oth. Oh blood, blood, blood!

Jag. Patience, I ſay; your mind perhaps may change.

Oth. Never, Jago. Like to the Pontic ſea,
Whoſe icy current and compulſive courſe
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Helleſpont;
Even ſo my bloody thoughts with violent pace
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up.——Now by yonder marble heaven,
In the due reverence of a ſacred vow,
I here engage my words.

Having thus wrought him up to his purpoſe, Jago ſwears that he will give himſelf up entirely to the ſervice and revenge of Othello's injury.

In theſe laſt quotations it is eaſy to ſee, that figurative expreſſions, when they ariſe from the ſubject, unforced, and unſought after, are the moſt naturally expreſſive of paſſion; the mind, dilated and carried on by the deſire of revenge, riſes into metaphor and ſimile, with the utmoſt propriety; the occaſion is equal to the conception and ideas, and not the leaſt colour of bombaſt, or falſe expreſſion, appears thro' the whole.

In all the French theatre I know of no play, in which equal knowledge in human nature is manifeſted, where two characters ſo juſtly drawn, ſo nicely contraſted, and ſo well ſuſtained, are to be found; a common genius would have erred a thouſand times in writing ſuch parts, Othello would have manifeſted a thouſand marks of being a fool, in not ſeeing Jago's deſigns, and Jago betrayed himſelf by too bare-faced a conduct of his intention; as it is managed by Shakeſpeare, there is no one ſlip or deviation of character in either, in one ſingle inſtance.

An-

ANOTHER letter, Madam, may probably bring you farther thoughts on this play; let me here remark however, that great geniuſes being difficultly imitated, Shakeſpeare has been the cauſe of two vaſt miſtakes, in the ſucceeding authors of this nation.

THE firſt is, that they have copied his diverſity of ſcenery, and not poſſeſſed the power of conceiving or ſuſtaining their characters as they ought; for this reaſon, the plays which appear alert, active, and entertaining to the eye on the ſtage, by dint of ſtage-trick, and win ſome applauſe in the firſt preſentations, are damned in the cloſet, and never more revived on the theatre.

THE other is, the admiration of that figurative ſtyle in Shakeſpeare, ſo natural, becoming, and juſt, as he uſes it, filled with ideas anſwering the words. This has created a manner of writing, conſiſting entirely of verbage without imagery to ſuſtain it, a cold altiſonant, giganteſque ſhadow, inane and puerile.

THIS, Madam, tho' I fear it may appear to have the air of dictating, has nothing of that in its intent. Permit me then, the honor to know whether you confirm me in this opinion? Whether I ought to deem myſelf a judge in matters of genius, when I place the author of this, above any writer which the French, or any nation, has hitherto produced: your opinion will determine me. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LETTER LV.

To the Reverend Father ALESSANDRO ADIMARI, *at* Rome.

"Dear Sir,

AMONGST the nations of the earth, how few have yet poſſeſt men of true taſte and ſuperior genius! and even amongſt thoſe, where the human ſoul has reached that degree which is ſo much beyond the common race of mortals, how ſmall is that number in compariſon of the whole inhabitants!

—A VERULAM, or Newton, are but two of millions, which breathed the ſame Britiſh air with them at different periods; theſe have bequeathed the character of ſcience and genius to a whole nation, for ages to come; perhaps all duration; and many millions of Britons draw honor, eſteem, and reputation from the nations around, from what has been the conceptions of theſe two enlighten'd men.

To

To theſe and ſome others it is owing, that the Engliſhman meets a polite and honorable reception in every court in Europe; not to the battels of Marlborough, Edward the black prince, or Harry the fifth, who have each conquered the French nation in arms; but to theſe men, who with Milton, Shakeſpeare, and other eminent writers, have carried the point of genius beyond the wits of the Gallic nation.

All kingdoms have in their turn produced men of capacity in military affairs, from the northern Goth, to the ſandy plains of Mauritania, perhaps in every nation upon the globe; yet, few have hitherto been favoured with men of great literary genius.

When we recollect alſo, that many things may conduce to eſtabliſh the reputation of a general, which can never enter into that of men who ſtudy letters; the reaſon will appear yet plainer, why there are more generals who have acquired fame by arms, than men who have obtain'd it by writing.

THE ſucceſs of a commander depends greatly on the accidents which attend the day of battle, which he could never foreſee, and from which his own ſagacity drew no advantage at the moment of their happening. The troops which a general commands contribute greatly to the fame he muſt obtain, and the officers who are employed under him again, much more.

A GENERAL may riſe to the higheſt reputation, by being engaged againſt men of little military genius in the enemy's army; and (without deſign to leſſen the duke of Marlborough's renown) it does not ſeem unreaſonable to imagine, that his engaging againſt commanders who were of an inferior genius to thoſe who preceded in the war againſt king William, facilitated the way, and conduced much to his acquiring that glory which attended him in all his actions; is it not probable that Luxembourg would have made the conqueſt at Blenheim more difficult and dear, than Tallard and Marſin? And even Villars, who had ſucceeded on that ſpot the preceding year, would he have committed the egregious miſtakes which

which were diſcovered by many officers in the French army, the evening before the battle?

Would Turenne have diſpoſed his troops in the ſame manner at Ramillies, as they were drawn up by Villeroi? And would not better-planned diſpoſitions, and ſuperior judgments, tho' they might not have abſolutely diſconcerted the duke of Marlborough's extenſive capacity in military affairs, have interrupted or leſſened the rapidity of that tide of glory, which always bore him ſo ſwiftly on to fame.

I do not ſay this with deſign to diminiſh the Engliſh hero's renown; but to ſhew, that fame in military affairs may depend much on the inequality of capacity and talents of thoſe who oppoſe each other.

Whoever of two generals, tho' both men of weak or inferior intellects, prevails in battle, he is honored and conſidered as a moſt eminent and great ſoldier; ſucceſs gives him this reputation, when probably a man of true capacity, who ſaw his weakneſs, would have vanquiſhed him

him with very little difficulty. It is not then, in military matters, the ſuperiority of genius alone which communicates immortality; but frequently the miſtakes, weakneſs and confuſion of his antagoniſt, which place the crown of laurel on the conqueror's head.

HAD the duke de Gramont purſued the orders of marſhal Noailles at Dettingen, would the victory have fallen to the Britiſh king, who was preſent at the battle?

A THOUSAND accidents unforeſeen by the conqueror, ſudden pannics, the unequal oppoſition of inferior genius in the other general, a ſtorm of rain in the enemies face, or even the dazzle of the ſun-ſhine, may give conqueſt and immortal fame to a general; neither of which can aſſiſt in creating that permanent glory which attends the works of men of the moſt exalted genius in literary productions.

THE Greek and Latin claſſics draw no advantage from accident; their writings ſtand naked and unaſſiſted by all the incidents which generally communicate ſucceſs to military atchieve-

chievements; their works are criticized and examined in the cool hour of the ſhade, as they exiſt in themſelves; hiſtorian is compared with hiſtorian, according to his true and genuine powers of genius and capacity: Theucydides and Livy are viewed and examined, as each exceeds or falls below the other, in all thoſe requiſites which are neceſſary to form an eminent author in that kind of writing: poet in like manner with poet, of the ſame kind of compoſition; Homer, Virgil, Taſſo, and Milton; in each of theſe it may be truly diſtinguiſhed, how much the ſucceeding are obliged to their predeceſſors, what helps and aſſiſtance they may have borrowed, and their true merit decided and eſtabliſhed. Chance then effects nothing in advancing the reputation of writers; I mean that reputation which outlives the author, unſuſtained by the falſe taſte of men of high rank, the zeal of friends and party, or the whirling whim of faſhion, that for a moment bears him to the top of the wheel.

MEN of letters then are tried at a ſeverer tribunal than men of arms; their merit is fixed on more eſtabliſhed principles, and a better foundation;

dation; and yet, ſuch is the event, the eclat of fire and ſword, ruined nations, kings enſlaved, and ſlaughtered millions, are more the admiration of mankind, than the man of ſtudy who advances arts and ſciences, happineſs and health, a public bleſſing.

THERE is ſcarce a more depreciating conſideration to human nature, than that the mild arts of peace ſhould meet ſuch little ſucceſs, and the profeſſors of ſlaughter and deſtruction, find applauſe and honorable reception every where: this diſpoſition ſeems to be inherent in the nature of man.

FOR myſelf I confeſs, when I behold the monuments and tombs of thoſe ravagers, with pompous panegyrics of their military actions, I conceive the greateſt abhorrence at their names and characters; I can never eſteem that being, whoſe malicious heart prompts his underſtanding and his arm by the worſt of paſſions, to the deſtruction of his own ſpecies; he is to my eyes only a robber, more illuſtrious and pernicious than the common highwayman; and tho' the world have agreed to honor ſuch men, with all that is to be given

in

in it; yet to me, every monument which preſerves the memory of theſe kind of beings, is but a ſtanding ſatyr againſt the perſons who performed the actions they recount, thoſe who have beſtowed on them theſe ſuperb acknowledgments, all who look on, read and applaud, and perhaps human nature itſelf.

WHAT is a long liſt of victories, but a keen invective on human nature? What are the hiſtories of thouſands ſlain, but a demonſtration of our delight in bloodſhed? cities ruined, nations plundered, temples and deities prophaned, are the glories of that being which boaſts of humanity, and calls itſelf the lord of the creation.

IF riches crown the event, all terminates well, the author is juſtified; the barrier of gold is the ſacred impaſſable defence, behind which the violator is ſecure from all attacks, unleſs his conſcience ſometimes diſquiet his enjoyments, and touch that heart with remorſe for its poſſeſſor, which it never felt for others, in the bloody hour of deſtruction.

I HAVE wandered from my firſt deſign; but ſuch as it is, pray take it; and if it be not cha-

racteriſtic

racteriſtic of the Engliſh alone, it is more general, and becomes a remark which may be made on all the nations of the earth, where learning has flouriſhed, that thoſe, who ſave, delight, and inſtruct, are infinitely leſs honored than thoſe who terrify, corrupt, and deſtroy. I am,

Your moſt obedient.

LETTER LVI.

To the Rev. Father FABIO MARETTI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

NOTHING is more diſputed amongſt thoſe who pretend to be judges of what paſſes in letters and arts, than the ideas of taſte: Each Engliſh traveller, who has ſeen the ſouth-ſide of the Alps, would imagine himſelf affronted, if you do not allow him an excellent connoiſſeur in architecture, painting, and ſtatuary; and all this from pure preſumption of having paſt his eyes over much of the moſt exquiſite of theſe productions.

IF one conſiders the qualifications requiſite for ſuch deciſions, I fanſy that part of the world which has never travelled beyond the limits of Great Britain, will not be willing to allow theſe travellers all the ſuperiority which they claim; and tho' they may agree, that in many diſeaſes breathing air impregnated with ſpicy exhalations, may facilitate the

the health of the ſick; yet in walking amongſt the works of the Grecian ſculptors, Roman and other Italian painters, the effluvia are ſcarce ſtrong enough to create ſo great an alteration in the knowledge of theſe things, as from ignorance to ſkill and diſtinction.

How few of thoſe men of taſte who have travelled Italy, have ever ſtudied the human body; it is cloathed and concealed, and almoſt impoſſible in the common ways of life to be ſeen frequently and with attention; notwithſtanding this, in every painting and piece of ſculpture, they ſet themſelves forth as juſt judges of every human figure, which can never be obtained but from the thorow conſideration of many living bodies.

But to wave all examination of the power of judging of thoſe things which are known by compariſon, and where the originals are concealed from proper inſpection; let us ſee how much theſe travellers have improved the taſte of this nation, by their perigrinations, in architec-

ture; Inigo Jones, and Sir Chriſtopher Wren have been excellent, the firſt equal perhaps to any man amongſt the whole liſt of theſe artiſts; and perhaps at that time the three greateſt men in the world in point of genius were natives of and reſided in this iſland, Verulam, Shakeſpeare, and Jones; and had not the too northern monarch, who then ſat on the Britiſh throne, damped the genius of the Engliſh nation by his theological diſputes, quaint expreſſions, frigid conceptions, and frivolous conceits; the fire of that celeſtial influence had reached yet farther.

It was then, genius ſeems to have been moſt prevalent in this iſle, from which time it has declined, and that taſte which was its companion, is loſt entirely.

Could you leave the Italian ſhores, and viſit this kingdom, you would be enraptured at beholding the banqueting-houſe of Whitehall; a more perfect building in true ſublimity of taſte, is to be ſeen no where.

When turning round, you would behold with indignation, that which is lately built for the horſe-guards of the Britiſh king, wondering how it was poſſible, that any man in ſight of all that is perfect and characteriſtic, could erect that which is unmeaning, ungraceful and ridiculous; without ſtrength or any one idea of intention, made up of littleneſſes, the turret which is in the center, is ſo very heavy, and the building ſo very light that ſuſtains it, you expect every moment to ſee it drop into the middle thro' want of powers to ſupport it.

The ſimple and ſublime have loſt all influence almoſt every where, all is Chineſe or Gothic; every chair in an apartment, the frames of glaſſes, and tables, muſt be Chineſe: the walls covered with Chineſe paper fill'd with figures which reſemble nothing of God's creation, and which a prudent nation would prohibit for the ſake of pregnant women.

In one chamber, all the pagods and diſtorted animals of the eaſt are piled up, and called the

beautiful decorations of a chimney-piece; on the ſides of the room, lions made of porcelain, grinning and miſhapen, are placed on brackets of the Chineſe taſte, in arbors of flowers made in the ſame ware, and leaves of braſs painted green, lying like lovers in the ſhades of old Arcadia.

NAY, ſo exceſſive is the love of Chineſe architecture become, that at preſent the fox-hunters would be ſorry to break a leg in purſuing their ſport in leaping any gate that was not made in the eaſtern taſte of little bits of wood ſtanding in all directions; the connoiſſeurs of the table delicacies can diſtinguiſh between the taſte of an ox which eats his hay from a Chineſe crib, a hog that is incloſed in a ſtye of that kind, or a fowl fattened in a coop the fabric of which is in that deſign, and find great difference in the flavor.

THE Gothic too has its advocates; you ſee a hundred houſes built with porches in that taſte, ſuch as are belonging to many chapels; even door-caſes and the fronts of ſome dwellings, which might be drawn by one horſe like a chaiſe, are

are fitted up in this manner; not to mention that rooms are ſtuccoed in this taſte, with all the minute unmeaning carvings, which are found in the moſt Gothic chapels of a thouſand years ſtanding.

SUCH is the preſent prevailing taſte in this city.

BUT perhaps, whilſt I am blaming this in the people of England, the ſame thing may have prevailed at Rome, at leaſt I am afraid of it, if a ſample of your whole preſent taſte may be taken from the ſingers, which you furniſh to this city.

TO my unpolite ears, the airs which are ſung at preſent have no longer the imitation of any thing which would expreſs paſſion or ſentiment, and the whole merit lyes in the Gothic and Chineſe cloſes and cantabiles, frithered into niceties and diviſions, which, like minute carvings, are the certain characteriſtics of a little taſte, that delights more in difficulties than truth, that would rather ſee a poſture-maſter in all bodily diſtortion, than the graceful attitudes of Dupré

on the French theatre of the opera at Paris, in the moſt exalted manner of dancing.

THE Chineſe taſte is ſo very prevalent in this city at preſent, that even pantomime has obliged harlequin to ſeek ſhelter in an entertainment, where the ſcenes and characters are all in the taſte of that nation.

THERE is one part of Chineſe manners however, which is not yet put in practice in England; the little ſhoes which are contrived to cramp the feet, and confine the ladies to their houſes, do not yet prevail; and I believe that Huſbands have not power enough over their wives, to preach them into that faſhion, which would oblige them to be mere domeſtic animals.

IN truth, this taſte for littleneſſes is advancing a great pace, in all the parts of the national entertainments; their theatrical pieces in tragedy and comedy, have infinitely more variety of ſtage trick than character, and ten new ſcenes for one paſſage of good writing; in fact it is the eye which is written to, and not the underſtanding; racks, wheels, and other inſtru-

ments of death, together with a few kicks and ſtruggles at the moment of dying, like a cock turkey beating his wings when his neck is twiſted, make up too much of the moving parts of an Engliſh modern tragedy. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LET-

LETTER LVII.

To the Reverend Father FILIPPO BONINI, *at* Rome.

Dear Sir,

IF the Italians were the firſt improvers of gardens, and plantations, the French have excelled us, and the Engliſh carried the taſte of that embelliſhment much higher, than it has appeared either in our country, or in France.

THEY have excluded that regularity of plan which makes the deſign of all gardens in every other part of Europe, and following thoſe ideas which are characteriſtic of ſome ſenſation relating to human nature, have made a garden in England a ſenſible conſideration, and adapted it to all ſtates which are incident to human minds in general.

THE gay and airy temper finds the open and chearful ſpots of light, which are acceptable to that diſpoſition, and the melancholy mood finds

the

the ſolitary and ſhady grove, by the ſide of which ſlowly creeps along the brook, complaining ſoftly amongſt the pebbles.

In the Engliſh gardens there is infinite variety without regularity, agreeable to the face of nature that diverſifies all, and not according to the ancient and preſent taſte of France and Italy, which diſpoſes a garden like a human creature, and carries the image of ſelf into all its deſigns, with alleys anſwering alleys, like legs to legs, and arms to arms, and the great walk in the middle for the trunk of the body.

A manner of diſpoſing things very natural to the mind of that man, which cannot diveſt itſelf of ſuch intereſting ideas as ſelf, and yet very unnatural with reſpect to that which theſe diſpoſitions ought to reſemble.

The *jet d'eau* is quite out of faſhion in this kingdom; the caſcade, and falling ſtreams bubling amongſt rocks, the winding river without regularity of figure, or ſtrait parallel lines, make the water-works of this country.

In truth, it is always unnatural to ſee water riſing into the air, contrary to its original tendency.

This, however contrary it may be to pure taſte, I think in ſome countries may be allowed of, ſuch as in the ſummer's days in our native land, when the ſultry air is fanned by the motion of the water in the *jets d'eau*, and the refreſhing ſenſe of coolneſs imparted at once to the feeling, ſeeing, and hearing; for the two laſt ſenſes have the ideas of coolneſs imparted to them, by the ſight and ſound of water.

In this iſland, where intenſe heat is ſeldom known, and when it happens is of ſhort duration, there does not ſeem to be the ſame neceſſity of violating the native propenſity of water, to obtain a greater pleaſure by it, than can otherwiſe be had.

However, this ſimplicity and grandeur of taſte in gardening, which has produced many fine plantations in this kind, is at preſent ſuffering with that of all other things; the caracatura and minute are again prevailing in too many places.

THE citizen who viſits his rural retirement cloſe to the road, thronged with coaches, carts, waggons, chaiſes, and all kinds of carriages, which differs from London only in this, that in winter it rains ſmoke in the city, and in ſummer duſt in the country, muſt have his plantation of an acre diverſified with all that is to be found in the moſt extenſive garden of ſome thouſand acres; here muſt be temples to every goddeſs as well as Cloacina, woods, waters, lawns, and ſtatues, which being thus contrived to contain ſo many things, is in fact, nothing at all, and that which might be ſomething by being but one, is entirely loſt by being intended to be ſo many; one wonders how ſo many things can be *crammed into* ſo ſmall a place, as we do at the whole furniture of a room in a cherry-ſtone; it is a ſcene for fairies.

THIS is but the old taſte of ſhaped flower-knots in box, cut yews, and clipt hedges, in another edition, which has no more taſte than the former.

PERHAPS there is not a thing upon the face of the earth truer than the belief that taſte

is the general poſſeſſion of all men; I mean every man aſſumes it to himſelf, tho' he denies it to his neighbour, by which it is at once univerſal in one view, and a non-exiſtent in another.

THERE is however, ſome analogy between man and all his deſigns of this kind; the true taſte in gardens is formed on what we feel in ourſelves, at the ſight of different ſcenes in nature; a garden without this meaning in its diſpoſition cannot pleaſe long; novelty indeed, will beget ſome delight in the beginning, but without ſcenes which correſpond to all ſituations of our minds, it ſoon becomes flat and irkſome.

TO deſign a garden well, the perſon muſt ſtudy the ground on which he intends to plant, the nature of thoſe parts thro' which the water flows, and what uſe can be made of the woods already grown; from conſiderations of this kind, taſte may communicate characters to different parts, and adapt the whole to that variety of paſſions and ſenſations, which diſtinguiſh the human heart.

THIS requires much imagination; it is not ſufficient to remember what was ſeen at any one place; to follow that exactly would be impoſſible, or if it could be done, the whole would be one piece of plagiariſm.

THE art lies in ſelecting the moſt ſtriking objects, which have affected the mind with any kind of paſſion or ſenſation, and then by recalling thoſe ideas, give a combination to theſe objects, which has never yet been ſeen in nature, and yet which the eye of a judge will agree to be natural when put together.

THIS, tho' it may ſeem a taſk of no great difficulty, is yet much more ſo than may be at firſt imagined; for tho' many people remember what they have ſeen, yet very few in nature have the power of uniting the parts of various ſubjects, ſo as to make one whole that ſhall be ſtriking, characteriſtic and affecting.

IT is in the combination of viſible objects, ſo as that they may affect the mind with any paſſion, pleaſing or diſpleaſing ſenſation, as it is

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in that of combining ſounds, which may affect us with ſimilar feelings.

In the latter, the tones which accompany the expreſſions of tenderneſs, grief, rage, or other paſſions, muſt be diſtinguiſhed and combined, ſo as to characterize an air either complaining, ſoft, or angry, which is much the ſame kind of genius, with that of combining the objects of ſight in light and ſhade, open and obſcure, creating horror or delight, indulging love or ſorrow.

As there are few muſicians who have excelled in all parts of a grand compoſition, ſo there are few who have ſucceeded in the planning and deſigning gardens.

One maſter in muſic is excellent in compoſing the firſt violin of a concerto, and meagre in all the reſt; others in their favourite inſtruments with the like imperfections; Corelli fills all, and makes the whole piece one ſimple and united ſound of various inſtruments, each ſuſtaining and ſuſtained.

In gardening alſo, one deſigner plans the gay part, and fails in the ſerious; he trills along a

little

little ſtream with elegance and propriety, and brobdignags the expanſe of water and almoſt makes a new deluge; Kent, the beſt deſigner in this way, is the Corelli of gardeners, as may be ſeen wherever he has followed his own inclination, in the gardens he has deſigned.

Alas! the bane of men of fine and elegant taſte, and the cauſe of its ſudden decline, is the belief in every rich man who has an inclination to build, or plant, that he has a taſte equal to his wealth, and to the undertaking, and a right to obtrude his opinion on the moſt accompliſhed judge, in architecture and gardening: this epiſtle I fear is too much in the dictating ſtrain, when I recollect to whom I am writing, to you whoſe taſte in theſe arts is certainly juſt and elegant, from what you have ſhewn in poetry their ſiſter. I am,

Your moſt obedient!

LETTER LVIII.

To the Counteſs of **** *at* Rome.

Madam,

IF the wits of England were as happy as I am, in knowing the ſuperior taſte, which you manifeſt in all you examine in literature, they would have reaſon to be well pleaſed with the preference which you give to their favorite dramatic poet, above all thoſe, that any nation has yet produced.

I AGREE with you, his characters are better drawn, and better underſtood than any other dramatic writer, as you have proved in the many inſtances which you have mark'd out to me; all his imitators have ſwelled into the giganteſque in their attempts: their pretended characters, by endeavouring to reach the very ſummit of the ſublime, have been like very tall men in nature, half animated bodies, which, wanting ſouls proportioned to their ſubſtance, appear a languid lump of ſomething bigger in body, and yet leſs than man in true ſpirit.

PERHAPS

PERHAPS there is no inſtance amongſt the whole race of writers, where it can be ſo truly diſtinguiſhed how a poet may be ſuperior to all men in his conceptions, and ſuſtaining characters in full power in his writings, and yet deficient in giving life, propriety, and action, to the productions of his own genius on the ſtage.

SHAKESPEARE, the firſt of dramatic writers, is ſaid to have been one of the leaſt of dramatic actors.

WILL you, Madam, have the goodneſs to tell me whence this difference took its riſe; or, ſince I am upon this ſubject, and have a peculiar ambition of pleaſing and appearing favourable in your eyes; will you permit me to riſque ſome ſuggeſtions on that head?

THE variety of characters to be found in Shakeſpeare, is no where elſe to be paralleled; not only almoſt all ranks amongſt the living, from the loweſt peaſant to the crowned head, madmen, fools, philoſophers, patriots, tyrants, wits, and men of all kinds of humour; he has paſt the bounds of this world, and brought back

the very dead, to revisit the glimpses of the moon making night hideous; the limits of nature withheld him not in his imaginary characters of witches, Caliban, fairies, and others, combined of qualities which all that read agree ought to enter into these compositions, which he has formed without one discordant property.

After this display of the powers of imagination, which had every part of mental nature under its direction, nor that alone, his descriptions of external objects, are as great and just as those of the internal feelings; is it not amazing that he could not communicate life and action to his own words and conceptions? In truth, it is universally acknowledged that he represented no character of all that variety which he was master of, except that of the ghost in Hamlet, with any tolerable degree of merit.

It plainly appears from the direction which young Hamlet gives the players in that tragedy, that no man knew better how an ac-

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tor ſhould behave in voice and action, than Shakeſpeare, and yet no one perhaps was leſs able to execute his conceptions than himſelf.

If we conſider this truly, Madam, may not ſome reaſon be aſſigned for it from the very nature of genius, which was ſo excellently ſuperior in this man?

To write well, in him, was no more than drawing water from that inexhauſtable ſource of imagination which he poſſeſſed; he ſaw with accuracy, felt with ſenſibility, obſerved with perſpicuity, and combined with juſtice; he had been more engaged in examining how men thought, than how they expreſt themſelves by action; and language being the exerciſe of every hour, he thence poſſeſſed the powers of expreſſing ſuperior to all men the conceptions of his mind, which are alſo above all others.

No man can write well from copying the manner of others, the imitation looks thro', and bears the mark of ſervility: no writer was ever leſs indebted to the works of preceding authors, than Shakeſpeare.

In playing the parts which he wrote, the want of obſervation on the actions of men in thoſe ſituations, perhaps prevented him from performing well, moſt of which were ideal with reſpect to himſelf, having never ſeen particular beings in human nature, in the various circumſtances of diſtreſs and pleaſure, in tragedy and comedy, which he has drawn.

He had imagined all theſe parts from intuitive knowledge, and internal ſenſation, and expreſt them with truth and ſublimity, by a language which he was perfectly maſter of.

But when he came to give propriety, grace, and action to the very paſſages which he had written ſo inimitably well, he failed, the language of action was unpractiſed in him, in attending to what the heart felt in each paſſion; he neglected how the limbs ſhould move, and features expreſs; and thus perhaps, tho' ſuperior in the ideal part of a player, was imperfect in the practice of it, as many men who dance but ill can teach others extremely well.

May it not be imagined alſo, that Shakeſpeare having paſt his firſt years in the country,

try, which in his days was not ſo polite, as at preſent, and even in hard work (being bred to trade) might have contracted an aukward gait and unbecoming mein, which is the conſtant attendant of labour, and the effects of which never can be entirely overcome by any future attempts. This, tho' it had affected every motion, and deſtroyed the grace of action, had not at all influenced the powers of his imagination.

We ſee ſomething like this in another view in every day's practice; the men of genius who are born in the parts of a country diſtant from the metropolis, contract from their infancy a pronunciation which always diſtinguiſhes itſelf from that which is the pureſt and polite; that is, the organs of ſpeech have taken an aukward moment; and yet, in their writings, nothing of this can be perceived, for tho' words are differently pronounced in the various provinces of a country, yet they are written alike in all; and tho' the ear diſtinguiſh the dialect in each native, the eye cannot diſcover it in the ſtyle, where they are ſpelt the ſame in all counties.

THERE is ſomething more to be ſaid in vindication of this manner of thinking; action is for the moſt part imitation of ſomething ſeen. This then is a kind of mimickry, which may be learnt by practice and habitude, tho' without doubt, the moſt perfect action is ſpeaking, and expreſſing by voice and attitude, what the inſelt ſenſations of the ſoul ſuggeſt; this perhaps is as rarely met with amongſt players, as genius in writing dramatic pieces.

MIMICKRY or imitation, was that which Shakeſpeare could the leaſt of all men be ſuppoſed to be capable of ſubmitting to; he ſaw things above all men, and therefore could draw no aſſiſtance in acting then like any. The talent of genius is intuition, and not imitation, of combining and expreſſing objects and ſentiments a-new, and not remembering and acting them as they have really paſt in life.

THUS, Madam, after having inſenſibly ſtolen into the dictator from the ſuppliant, permit me to advance ſomething farther. ,,

A PLAYER may draw applauſe from imitation, even a ſervile one, for which a writer would be condemned.

To

To inſtance, ſuppoſe in ſpeaking to his army, the actor who performed the part of a general, uſed the very action, attitude, and expreſſion of feature, with which the great duke of Marlborough ſpoke to his forces; in thus addreſſing his theatrical troops, he would have received applauſe from all the ſpectators, tho' each knew from whence he drew the imitation.

In like manner in comic character, the player who takes off all the air and ſingularities of a real miſer, will be applauded; we ſay it is ſuch a man.

And yet, the poet who wrote either the tragedy which contained the firſt character, or the comedy in which the ſecond was deſcribed, would have been hiſs'd if he had taken the real ſpeech of the duke, or expreſſions and converſation of the miſer. Such are the different fates which attend actors and authors, and yet each equally plagiaries.

A player then may walk thro' a life of applauſe in being no more than an imitator; a poet muſt ſink into contempt, for the ſame beha-

behaviour; we pardon men who mimick the miſer in action, and condemn thoſe who ſteal his known converſation; a player then may ſucceed on inferior talents than a dramatic writer, be exalted to the ſtars for the very reaſon which prevents genius from ſucceſs in the ſame parts; all men ſee the likeneſs which Gripe the player, has to Gripe the miſer, and applaud him, then hear the very expreſſions copied from his mouth, and condemn the poet. After all, it is not impoſſible alſo, but this diſapprobation of Shakeſpeare might partly riſe from his playing unlike all others, rather than inferior to any. Shakeſpeare the genius could not imitate any individual man in action, the audience probably could not conceive any thing to be juſt, above what they had been accuſtomed to behold in common nature.

It is now time to aſk pardon, and to cloſe this letter, which is already too long; my next ſhall tell you how an actor now living, performs ſome paſſages of this author. I am,

Madam,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

LET-

LETTER LIX.

To the Counteſs of *****, *at* Rome.

Dear Madam,

SHALL I meet your approbation, when I dare aſſert, that acting the part of a perſon of ſuperior life, ſublimely conceived and pathetically written, requires more genius than writing a tragedy where five acts of undiſtinguiſhable characters, and regular mediocrity, make its whole merit? I flatter myſelf that your opinion will not be different from mine in this inſtance, when I have laid before you all that I have to ſay on this occaſion.

IT has always appeared to me, that notwithſtanding the apparent raptures, with which men pretend to feel thoſe paſſages of an author, which place him above humanity, if their own performances in a like nature fall much ſhort of it, that they have never reached in their conception the true ſpirit of the author, which they have praiſed.

WHEREAS a player, who perſonates in every part the living manners of a ſuperior character, manifeſts beyond contradiction, that he has conceived the true idea of the author.

A POET therefore in raptures with the character of Lear, as Shakeſpeare has drawn it, who in his writings ſhould attempt ſomething of a ſimilar nature, inſtead of the ſovereign of unfixt temper, choleric and ſudden, whoſe ideas and conceptions expreſs royalty in every part of his anger, ſhould draw a porter in rage, replete with every Gothic groſsneſs, will be infinitely inferior in genius to him, that fills up this character with all that fire and majeſty which becomes the perſonage, as Shakeſpeare has completed it.

THIS, a player on the Engliſh ſtage perfectly accompliſhes: his name is Garrick.

IT may be a vanity; but you, Madam, will pardon even that in a private letter, not deſigned for the public eye. In the action of all other men I have imagined ſomething yet farther than has been expreſt by them; in this player,

player, and in this part, this man has exceeded all my imagination; and as Pouſſin is conſidered the painter of men of taſte, ſo in like manner Mr. Garrick is the player.

He is the only man on any ſtage where I have been, who ſpeaks tragedy truly and natural: the French tragedians mouth it too much, and to appear ſomething more than men, they loſe the reſemblance of humanity: a hero on that ſtage, in dreſs and expreſſion is a complete exotic of all nations, and ſeems a creature juſt arrived from ſome diſtant planet.

It muſt be allowed however, that the paſſion of anger is the eaſieſt to be imitated of all thoſe which the human mind is ſubject to; but to be angry with ſuperior ſovereignty is as difficult to attain as any part, to be executed with that dignity which this Engliſh actor imparts to it.

In the firſt act of the tragedy of Lear, when Cordelia has diſpleaſed him by that which ought to have had a contrary effect, his anger is

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ſhewn by very great expreſſion, very juſt tone of voice, and propriety of action; yet it ſtill augments, and becomes more energic, as the riſing occaſions require it; till at length when Goneril refuſes him his hundred followers, and ſays,

Be then adviſed by her, that elſe will take
That which ſhe begs, to leſſen your attendance:
Take half away, and ſee that the remainder
Be ſuch as may befit your age, and know
Themſelves and you.

After theſe words of inſolence, Lear replies,

Darkneſs and devils!
Saddle my horſes, call my train together.
Degenerate viper, I'll not ſtay with thee:
I yet have left a daughter—Serpent, monſter!
Leſſen my train, and call them riotous!
All men approved of choice and rareſt parts,
That each particular of duty know———
How ſmall, Cordelia, was thy fault? Oh Lear!
Beat at that gate which let thy folly in,
And thy dear judgment out; go, go, my people.

This all other actors ſpeak with that kind of rage, with which a drunken ſhoemaker curſes his

his daughter that has ſecretly taken his money from him, and prevented his going to the alehouſe; it is indeed a ſheer ſcolding. In Mr. Garrick it is a prince in anger, and every accompaniment expreſſes it thro' the whole paſſage. "How ſmall Cordelia," &c. This reflection, ſo natural to human minds, and parents in particular, to compare what they think a leſs fault in one child, whilſt they are ſuffering under the influence of a greater in another, is as truly expreſt by the actor, as imagined by the poet; and then reverting on himſelf at the words which follow, "Oh Lear," he abſolutely imparts a power to them, which cannot be conceived but with much difficulty by thoſe who have never beheld him: the whole bitter tide of reſentment pours back on himſelf, and is as fully expreſt from the fingers to the toes, thro' the flaſhing eye and keen feature, as Raphael has expreſt the being poſſeſt, in his demoniac, in his picture of the transfiguration; and in theſe words, the ſoul of every hearer ſhivers as he pronounces them,

Blaſts upon thee;
Th' untainted woundings of a father's curſe
Pierce ev'ry ſenſe about thee.

INDEED,

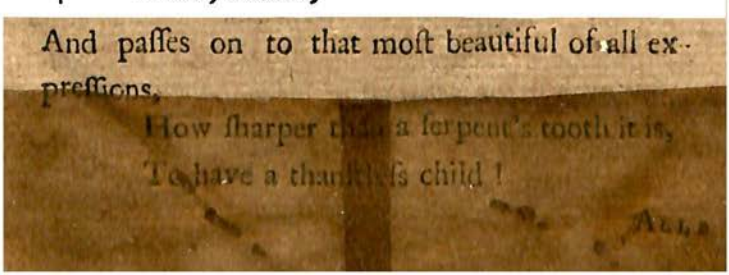
INDEED, I could not avoid expecting a paralytic ſtroke would wither every limb of Goneril; the power of expreſſion ſeemed as if of neceſſity it muſt prevail over heaven.

THEN follows that which is ſo natural to the ſoul of man in exceſſive anger, when it ſuffers equally from the faults of others and itſelf, turning back with threats upon this weakneſs, which had made him weep, he utters with the utmoſt internal ſenſibility, and yet weeps in oppoſition to his own reſolution,

Old fond eyes,
Lament this cauſe again, I'll pluck ye out,
And caſt you with the waters that ye loſe
To temper clay.

IT is not poſſible to decide which is ſuperior in the knowledge of nature, the poet who wrote, or the player who animates theſe paſſages. Afterwards when he begins

Hear, nature,



And paſſes on to that moſt beautiful of all expreſſions,

How ſharper than a ſerpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankleſs child!

ALL is ſo firmly and intereſtingly expreſt, with attitude and action ſo becoming the occaſion, that, forgetting where I am, aſtoniſhment ſeizes me that Goneril has power to go off the ſtage unblaſted at this imprecation: ſo perfectly the character is realized by every part of the player.

I THOUGHT to have inſtanced nothing of his powers in the ſecond act, but it is impoſſible to omit thoſe ſtarts of expreſſion which accompany ſo perfectly the ideas of the poet in anſwer to the following words of Gloſter,

You know the firey quality of the duke.

Lear replies,

Vengeance, death, plague, confuſion!
Firey! What quality—why Gloſter, Gloſter,
I'd ſpeak with the duke of Cornwall and his wife.

THESE and many other paſſages are ſpoken ſo juſtly, and with ſo much emphaſis, that their influence on the hearer is amazing: they appear amidſt the tempeſt of his mind, like flaſhes of lightening in a ſtormy night, making the horrors more viſible.

In the third act, Shakeſpeare, into whoſe hand nature had given the clue that leads thro' all her labyrinth of variety, reſerving the other end to herſelf, has placed Lear amidſt thunder-ſtorms, whirlwind, rain, and fire; in this part he ſhews how every object finds ſome connection with thoſe of a mind in deep diſtreſs. Lear ſays,

Rumble thy fill; fight whirlwind, rain, and fire;
Not fire, wind, rain, or thunder, are my Daughters.
I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindneſs;
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd ye children;
You owe me no obedience; then let fall
Your horrible pleaſure; here I ſtand your ſlave,
A poor infirm, weak, and deſpis'd old man.

Till the laſt line he agrees, that theſe elements owe him no gratitude or obedience, becauſe unallied to him by birth, or duty; yet, the laſt line recalling his preſent condition to his own imagination, he immediately conceives it a kind of mean cruelty to join with two diſobedient daughters, and ſays,

Yet

Yet will I call you ſervile miniſters,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Their engendered battle, againſt a head
So old and white as mine; oh! oh! 'tis foul.

This ſpeech is ſpoken at firſt with defiance; then, as the ſenſe changes, the player falls into an acquieſcence with this ſuffering; till coming to the laſt part, he feels with much contempt, that coward cruelty of baſely joining with the perpetrators of filial diſobedience; this is performed with ſuch natural and eaſy tranſition, as if his ſoul conceived originally every ſenſation, as they follow one another in the poet.

As the madneſs advances in the character of Lear, it increaſes in the action and expreſſion of the player; you ſcarce ſee where he firſt begins, and yet find he is mad before Kent ſays,

I fear'd 'twould come to this; his wits are gone.

It ſteals ſo gradually and imperceptibly, the difference grows like a colour which runs on from the lighteſt to the darkeſt tint without perceiving the ſhades, but by comparing them

at different parts of the whole: when he enters mad in the fourth act, with the mock enſigns of majeſty on him, thro' this whole ſcene, that which the poet has marked ſo ſtrongly, the player has alſo preſerved; that ſatyric turn, which accompanies madneſs ariſing from wrongs, is inimitably conceived by the poet, and ſuſtained by the player; that vague and fugitive manner of pronouncing, mixt with the ſarcaſtic touches of expreſſion, is truly exhibited; and as in the poet's writings, ſo in the player's behaviour, the king is never one moment forgotten; it is royalty in lunacy: to quote every paſſage, would make a letter a whole play.

In that part of the fourth act where Lear recovers from his ſleep, as the poet who knew that ſound intellect muſt not appear too ſuddenly in ſuch inſtances of lunacy, ſo the player recovers his mind as gradually as he loſt it, and at length diſtruſting his being recovered, he ſays,

I will not ſwear theſe are my hands.

Cordelia anſwers,

O look

O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me.
No Sir, you muſt not kneel.

When Lear kneeling, the player pronounces with ſuch pathetic ſimplicity,

Pray do not mock me,
I am a very foolish, fond old man,
Fourſcore and upwards; and to deal plainly with you,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Who ever at the uttering of theſe words, as Mr. Garrick ſpeaks them, can avoid joining with Cordelia, muſt be more hardened than Goneril, or Regan.

She ſays,

Then farewell to patience: witneſs for me,
Ye mighty powers, I ne'er complain'd till now.

With what knowledge of human nature was this written! When a mind, exhauſted by its former wildneſs, recovers, nothing is ſo weak and vacillating:

cillating: the unornamented ſimplicity of Lear's words, therefore, has more ſublimity and pathos, than all the powers of figure and metaphor could impart to them; and as it was imagined by Shakeſpeare, it is ſpoken by Mr. Garrick: my tears have ever teſtified this approbation.

THE remaining part of this act is equally inimitable; pray tell me, Madam, what art is this, which running from anger to rage, to madneſs, then ſoftens and ſinks into the timid and ſuppliant in poet and player; what compaſs and what power of nature muſt thoſe poſſeſs, who are equal to this variety and force?

IN the fifth act, where the old king ſleeps in the lap of Cordelia, he breaks out,

Charge, charge upon their flank, their laſt wing halts.
Puſh, puſh the battle, and the day's our own;
Their ranks are broke: down with Albany.
Who holds my hands?

This he pronounces in that imperfect and indiſtinct manner, which attends thoſe who talk in their

their ſleep, with expreſſion of anger, yet different from that of madneſs or a ſound mind; then wakes with a gentle exclamation,

Oh thou deceiving ſleep!
I was this very minute on the chace,
And now a priſoner here.———

THIS play terminates happily, as it is acted different from the manner in which Shakeſpeare wrote it; Cordelia is made Queen, and Lear retires to paſs away his life in quietneſs and devotion: many of the paſſages are tranſpoſed from the order they ſtand in the original; for that reaſon I have ſent you the alteration, that you may ſee it as it is played: the words which expreſs the joy at the thoughts of Cordelia's being a queen, are ſpoken with an emphaſis and energy, which is peculiar to Mr. Garrick only; and tho' the poet is no longer viſible in this place, the player ſuſtains his character in this alſo.

THUS in anger, in grief, in madneſs, in revenge, in weakneſs, in contempt, in joy, all is equally natural and amazing; the ſame poet fanſies

ſies all theſe, the ſame player follows him with equal juſtice.

DOES it not ſeem probable then, Madam, that the genius of a player is more analogous to the painter and muſician, than to the poet; he rather knows with what attitude, tone of voice, and expreſſion, characters already written ſhould be expreſſed and acted; than conceives with what words the characters in a ſtory painted by Dominiquino, Pouſſin, or other eminent artiſts, ſhould be animated; he can better adjuſt ſounds to poetical compoſitions, than invent poetry for airs already made.

THAT kind of man then, which is uncontaminated in action and expreſſion with the borrowed aid of mimickry, is real genius; and, if it was not unpolite in writing to a lady, I could end with a ſyllogiſm, that this actor whom I have too imperfectly deſcribed in this letter, is undoubtedly ſo, and of a much ſuperior nature to a *mediocre* poet, indeed, on a level with great painters, and great muſicians, a Raphael or Corelli. I am,

Your moſt obedient ſervant.

VINIS.

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